UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AT LOS ANGELES

SELECT WORKS,

IN

VERSE AND PROSE,

OF

MR. A. COWLEY.

VOL. I.

2959 2

SELECT WORKS
OF MR. A. COWLEY;
IN TWO VOLUMES:
With a PREFACE and NOTES by the Editor.
VOLUME THE FIRST.

Drawn & engrav'd by John Hall from an Original Picture painted by Zincken Enamel, in the Collection of the Hon.ble Horace Walpole.

THE THIRD EDITION.

" Forgot his Epic, nay Pindaric art;
" But still we love the language of his heart." POPE.

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PREFACE.

IT would be using moſt writers of name very ill, to treat them with that freedom, which I have preſumed to take with Mr. Cowley. But every thing he wrote, is either ſo good or ſo bad, that, in all reaſon, a ſeparation ſhould be made; leſt the latter, which unhappily, is the greater part, ſhould, in the end, ſtifle and overlay the former.

THE reaſon of this ſtriking difference in the compoſitions of the ſame man, whoſe genius and learn-

ing are unqueſtionable, is, That he generally followed the taſte of his time, which was the worſt imaginable; and rarely his own, which was naturally excellent; as may be ſeen in the few pieces of his poetry, here ſelected from the reſt; and, eſpecially, in his proſe-works, which (except the notes on his *Pindaric Odes*, and *Davideis*) are given entire, and have no common merit.

But the talents, by which he is diſtinguiſhed, as a polite writer, are the leaſt of his praiſe. There is ſomething in him, which pleaſes above his wit, and in ſpite of it. It is that moral air, and tender ſenſibility of mind, which every one perceives and loves in reading Mr. Cowley.

Cowley. And this character of his genius, though it be expreſſed, indeed, in his other writings, comes out eſpecially, and takes our attention moſt, in ſome of his *ſmaller poems and eſſays*; which, therefore, it ſeemed to be for the author's credit, and the convenience of his readers, to draw near to each other, and place, together, in one view. I have ſaid—*for the convenience of his readers:* for, though all are capable of being entertained, perhaps inſtructed, by the image of a good mind, when ſet before them, yet few will be at the pains to ſeek that inſtruction or entertainment for themſelves, through the ſcattered works of ſo unequal and voluminous a writer.

To do juſtice to the memory of Mr. Cowley, in theſe two reſpects, I mean, in his capacity both of a polite and moral writer, is the ſole end of this publication. Every man of taſte and virtue will read it with pleaſure. There are, indeed, many lines diſperſed through his other poems, which deſerve praiſe. But, on the whole, it is enough if this ſmall collection go down to poſterity: In that caſe, neither they, nor the author, will have any great loſs, though the reſt be forgotten.

Lincoln's-Inn,
April 21, 1772.

R. HURD.

CON-

CONTENTS

OF

VOLUME THE FIRST.

THE EDITOR's Preface. Page v.
Dr. SPRAT's Life of Mr. Cowley. 1—57
ELEGIA DEDICATORIA. 59—62
The AUTHOR's Preface. 63—90
The AUTHOR's Preface to *Cutter of Coleman-ſtreet.* 91—105

POEMS.

I. The Motto. 107
II. Ode on Wit. 109
III. On the Death of Mr. Jordan. 113
IV. On the Death of Mr. W. Hervey. 114
V. To the Lord Falkland. 123

VI. On the Death of Sir. A. Vandyke. 126
VII. To Sir W. Davenant. 129
VIII. On the death of Mr. Craſhaw. 131
IX. Imitation of Martial, lib. V. ep. xxi. 135
X. Anacreontics. i. Love. 138
ii. Drinking. 139
iii. Beauty. 140
iv. The Duel. 141
v. Age. 142
vi. The Account. 143
vii. Gold. 145
viii. The Epicure. 146
ix. Another. ibid.
x. The Graſhopper. 148
xi. The Swallow. 149
xii. Elegy upon Anacreon. 150
XI. The Chronicle. A Ballad. 156
XII. Acme and Septimius. 161
XIII. The Praiſe of Pindar. An Ode. 164
XIV. Brutus.

XIV. Brutus. An Ode. 167
XV. To Mr. Hobbes. 173
XVI. Life and Fame. 181
XVII. On the death of Mrs. C. Philips. 186
XVIII. Hymn to Light. 192
XIX. To the Royal Society. 200
XX. The Complaint. 210

PROPOSITION for the Advancement of EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY. 219—244

AN

AN ACCOUNT OF The LIFE and WRITINGS Of Mr. ABRAHAM COWLEY.

Written to Mr. CLIFFORD:

Prefixed to the Folio Edition of 1668.

SIR,

MR. COWLEY in his will recommended to my care the reviſing of all his works that were formerly printed, and the collecting of thoſe papers which he had deſigned for the preſs. And he did it with this particular obligation, *That I ſhould be ſure to let nothing paſs, that might ſeem the leaſt offence to religion or*

good manners. A caution, which you will judge to have been altogether needleſs. For certainly, in all ancient or modern times, there can ſcarce any author be found, that has handled ſo many different matters in ſuch various ſorts of ſtyle, who leſs wants the correction of his friends, or has leſs reaſon to fear the ſeverity of ſtrangers.

ACCORDING to his deſire and his own intention, I have now ſet forth his Latin and Engliſh writings, each in a volume apart; and to that which was before extant in both languages, I have added all that I could find in his cloſet, which he had brought to any manner of perfection. I have thus, Sir, performed the will of the dead. But I doubt I ſhall not ſatisfy the expectation of the living, unleſs ſome account be here premiſed concerning this excellent man. I know very well, that he has given the world the beſt image of his own mind in theſe immortal monuments of his Wit.

Yet

Yet there is ſtill room enough left, for one of his familiar acquaintance to ſay many things of his poems, and chiefly of his life, that may ſerve for the information of his readers, if not for the increaſe of his name; which, without any ſuch helps, is already ſufficiently eſtabliſhed.

THIS, Sir, were an argument moſt proper for you to manage, in reſpect of your great abilities, and the long friendſhip you maintained with him. But you have an obſtinate averſion from publiſhing any of your Writings. I gueſs what pretence you have for it, and that you are confirmed in this reſolution by the prodigious multitude and imperfections of us writers of this age. I will not now diſpute, whether you are in the right; though I am confident you would contribute more to our reformation by your example, than reproofs. But however, ſeeing you perſiſt in your purpoſe, and have refuſed to adorn even this very ſubject, which you love ſo well; I beg your

assistance while I myself undertake it. This I do with the greater willingness, because I believe there is no man, who speaks of Mr. Cowley, that can want either matter or words. I only therefore intreat you to give me leave to make you a party in this relation, by using your name and your testimony. For by this means, though the memory of our friend shall not be delivered to posterity with the advantage of your wit, which were most to be desired; yet his praise will be strengthened by the consent of your judgement, and the authority of your approbation.

Mr. A. Cowley was born in the city of London, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighteen. His parents were citizens of a virtuous life and sufficient estate; and so the condition of his fortune was equal to the temper of his mind, which was always content with moderate things. The first years of his youth were spent in Westminster-school, where he soon obtained

ed and increaſed the noble genius peculiar to that place. The occaſion of his firſt inclination to poetry, was his caſual lighting on SPENSER's *Fairy Queen*, when he was but juſt able to read. That indeed is a poem fitter for the examination of men, than the conſideration of a child. But in him it met with a fancy, whoſe ſtrength was not to be judged by the number of his years.

IN the thirteenth year of his age there came forth a little book under his name, in which there were many things that might well become the vigour and force of a manly wit. The firſt beginning of his ſtudies, was a familiarity with the moſt ſolid and unaffected authors of antiquity, which he fully digeſted, not only in his memory, but his judgement. By this advantage he learnt nothing while a boy, that he needed to forget or forſake when he came to be a man. His mind was rightly ſeaſoned at firſt; and he had nothing to do,

but ſtill to proceed on the ſame foundation on which he began.

He was wont to relate, that he had this defect in his memory at that time, that his teachers could never bring it to retain the ordinary rules of grammar. However, he ſupplied that want, by converſing with the books themſelves, from whence thoſe rules had been drawn. That, no doubt, was a better way, though much more difficult; and he afterwards found this benefit by it, that, having got the Greek and Roman languages, as he had done his own, not by precept but uſe, he practiſed them, not as a ſcholar but a native.

With theſe extraordinary hopes he was removed to Trinity College in Cambridge; where, by the progreſs and continuance of his wit, it appeared that two things were joined in it, which ſeldom meet together, that it was both early ripe and laſting. This brought him into the love and eſteem

of

of the moſt eminent members of that famous ſociety; and principally of your uncle Mr. FOTHERBY, whoſe favours he ſince abundantly acknowledged, when his benefactor had quite forgot the obligation. His exerciſes of all kinds are ſtill remembered in that univerſity with great applauſe; and with this particular praiſe, that they were not only fit for the obſcurity of an academical life, but to have been ſhown on the true theatre of the world. There it was that, before the twentieth year of his age, he laid the deſign of divers of his moſt maſculine works, that he finiſhed long after: in which I know not whether I ſhould moſt commend, that a mind ſo young ſhould conceive ſuch great things, or that it ſhould be able to perfect them with ſuch felicity.

THE firſt occaſion of his entering into buſineſs, was the elegy that he writ on Mr. HERVEY's death: wherein he deſcribed the higheſt characters of religion, knowledge, and friendſhip, in an age when moſt

other men ſcarce begin to learn them. This brought him into the acquaintance of Mr. JOHN HERVEY, the brother of his deceaſed friend; from whom he received many offices of kindneſs through the whole courſe of his life, and principally this, that by his means he came into the ſervice of my lord ST. ALBANS.

WHEN the civil war broke out, his affection to the King's cauſe drew him to Oxford, as ſoon as it began to be the chief ſeat of the Royal party. In that univerſity he proſecuted the ſame ſtudies with a like ſucceſs. Nor in the mean time was he wanting to his duty in the war itſelf, for he was preſent and in ſervice in ſeveral of the King's journies and expeditions. By theſe occaſions and the report of his high deſerts, he ſpeedily grew familiar to the chief men of the court and the gown, whom the fortune of the war had drawn together. And particularly, though he was then very young, he had the entire friend-

ſhip

ſhip of my Lord FALKLAND, one of the principal ſecretaries of ſtate. That affection was contracted by the agreement of their learning and manners. For you may remember, Sir, we have often heard Mr. COWLEY admire him, not only for the profoundneſs of his knowledge, which was applauded by all the world, but more eſpecially for thoſe qualities which he himſelf more regarded, for his generoſity of mind, and his neglect of the vain pomp of human greatneſs.

DURING the heat of the civil war, he was ſettled in my Lord ST. ALBANS' family, and attended her Majeſty the Queen-mother, when, by the unjuſt perſecution of her ſubjects, ſhe was forced to retire into France. Upon this wandering condition of the moſt vigorous part of his life, he was wont to reflect, as the cauſe of the long interruption of his ſtudies. Yet we have no reaſon to think that he loſt ſo great a ſpace of time, if we conſider in what buſi-

neſs

neſs he employed his baniſhment. He was abſent from his native country above twelve years; which were wholly ſpent, either in bearing a ſhare in the diſtreſſes of the royal family, or in labouring in their affairs. To this purpoſe, he performed ſeveral dangerous journies, into Jerſey, Scotland, Flanders, Holland, or wherever elſe the King's troubles required his attendance. But the chief teſtimony of his fidelity was, the laborious ſervice he underwent, in maintaining the conſtant correſpondence between the late King and the Queen his wife. In that weighty truſt he behaved himſelf with indefatigable integrity and unſuſpected ſecrecy. For he cyphered and decyphered, with his own hand, the greateſt part of all the letters that paſſed between their Majeſties, and managed a vaſt intelligence in many other parts: which for ſome years together took up all his days, and two or three nights every week.

At length, upon his preſent Majeſty's removal out of France, and the Queen-mother's

mother's ſtaying behind, the buſineſs of that nature paſſed of courſe into other hands. Then it was thought fit, by thoſe on whom he depended, that he ſhould come over into England, and, under pretence of privacy and retirement, ſhould take occaſion of giving notice of the poſture of things in this nation. Upon his return, he found his country groaning under the oppreſſion of an unjuſt uſurpation. And he ſoon felt the effects of it. For, while he lay hid in London, he was ſeized on by a miſtake, the ſearch having been intended after another gentleman, of conſiderable note in the King's party. Being made a priſoner, he was often examined before the Uſurpers, who tried all imaginable ways to make him ſerviceable to their ends. That courſe not prevailing, he was committed to a ſevere reſtraint; and ſcarce at laſt obtained his liberty upon the hard terms of a thouſand pound bail, which burden Dr. SCARBOROUGH very honourably took upon himſelf. Under theſe bonds he continued till

till the general redemption. Yet, taking the opportunity of the confuſions that followed upon CROMWELL's death, he ventured back into France; and there remained in the ſame ſtation as before, till near the time of the King's return.

THIS certainly, Sir, is abundantly ſufficient to juſtify his loyalty to all the world; though ſome have endeavoured to bring it in queſtion, upon occaſion of a few lines in the Preface to one of his books. The objection I muſt not paſs by in ſilence, becauſe it was the only part of his life that was liable to miſinterpretation, even by the confeſſion of thoſe that envied his fame. In this caſe perhaps it were enough, to alledge for him to men of moderate minds, that what he there ſaid was publiſhed before a book of poetry, and ſo ought rather to be eſteemed as a problem of his fancy and invention, than as the real image of his judgement. But his defence in this matter may be laid on a

ſurer

ſurer foundation. This is the true reaſon that is to be given of his delivering that opinion. Upon his coming over, he found the ſtate of the Royal party very deſperate. He perceived the ſtrength of their enemies ſo united, that, till it ſhould begin to break within itſelf, all endeavours againſt it were like to prove unſucceſsful. On the other ſide, he beheld their zeal for his Majeſty's cauſe to be ſtill ſo active, that it often hurried them into inevitable ruin. He ſaw this with much grief. And though he approved their conſtancy as much as any man living, yet he found their unſeaſonable ſhewing it, did only diſable themſelves, and give their adverſaries great advantages of riches and ſtrength by their defeats. He therefore believed that it would be a meritorious ſervice to the King, if any man, who was known to have followed his intereſt, could inſinuate into the Uſurpers' minds, that men of his principles were now willing to be quiet, and could perſuade the poor oppreſſed Royaliſts to conceal

conceal their affections, for better occaſions. And as for his own particular, he was a cloſe priſoner when he writ that againſt which the exception is made; ſo that he ſaw it was impoſſible for him to purſue the ends for which he came hither, if he did not make ſome kind of declaration of his peaceable intentions. This was then his opinion. And the ſucceſs of things ſeems to prove, that it was not very ill grounded. For certainly it was one of the greateſt helps to the King's affairs, about the latter end of that tyranny, that many of his beſt friends diſſembled their counſels, and acted the ſame deſigns, under the diſguiſes and names of other parties.

THIS, Sir, you can teſtify to have been the innocent occaſion of theſe words, on which ſo much clamour was raiſed. Yet ſeeing his good intentions were ſo ill interpreted, he told me, the laſt time that ever I ſaw him, that he would have them omitted in the next impreſſion: of which his friend

friend Mr. Cook is a witneſs. However, if we ſhould take them in the worſt ſenſe of which they are capable: yet, methinks, for his maintaining one falſe tenet in the political philoſophy, he made a ſufficient atonement, by a continual ſervice of twenty years, by the perpetual loyalty of his diſcourſe, and by many of his other writings, wherein he has largely defended and adorned the Royal cauſe. And to ſpeak of him, not as our friend, but according to the common laws of humanity; certainly, that life muſt needs be very unblameable, which had been tried in buſineſs of the higheſt conſequence, and practiſed in the hazardous ſecrets of courts and cabinets; and yet there can nothing diſgraceful be produced againſt it, but only the error of one paragraph, and a ſingle metaphor.

But to return to my narration, which this digreſſion has interrupted: Upon the King's happy reſtoration, Mr. Cowley was paſt the fortieth year of his age; of which

which the greateſt part had been ſpent in a various and tempeſtuous condition. He now thought he had ſacrificed enough of his life to his curioſity and experience. He had enjoyed many excellent occaſions of obſervation. He had been preſent in many great revolutions, which in that tumultuous time diſturbed the peace of all our neighbour-ſtates, as well as our own. He had nearly beheld all the ſplendour of the higheſt part of mankind. He had lived in the preſence of princes, and familiarly converſed with greatneſs in all its degrees, which was neceſſary for one that would contemn it aright: for to ſcorn the pomp of the world before a man knows it, does commonly proceed rather from ill-manners than a true magnanimity.

He was now weary of the vexations and formalities of an active condition. He had been perplexed with a long compliance to foreign manners. He was ſatiated with the arts of court: which ſort of life, though

though his virtue had made innocent to him, yet nothing could make it quiet. Theſe were the reaſons that moved him to forego all public employments, and to follow the violent inclination of his own mind, which, in the greateſt throng of his former buſineſs, had ſtill called upon him, and repreſented to him the true delights of ſolitary ſtudies, of temperate pleaſures, and of a moderate revenue, below the malice and flatteries of fortune.

At firſt he was but ſlenderly provided for ſuch a retirement, by reaſon of his travels, and the afflictions of the party to which he adhered, which had put him quite out of all the roads of gain. Yet, notwithſtanding the narrowneſs of his income, he remained fixed to his reſolution, upon his confidence in the temper of his own mind, which he knew had contracted its deſires into ſo ſmall a compaſs, that a very few things would ſupply them all. But upon the ſettlement of the peace of

our nation, this hinderance of his deſign was ſoon removed; for he then obtained a plentiful eſtate, by the favour of my Lord ST. ALBANS, and the bounty of my Lord Duke of BUCKINGHAM; to whom he was always moſt dear, and whom he ever reſpected, as his principal patrons. The laſt of which great men, you know, Sir, it is my duty to mention, not only for Mr. COWLEY's ſake, but my own: though I cannot do it, without being aſhamed, that, having the ſame encourager of my ſtudies, I ſhould deſerve his patronage ſo much leſs.

THUS he was ſufficiently furniſhed for his retreat. And immediately he gave over all purſuit of honour and riches, in a time, when, if any ambitious or covetous thoughts had remained in his mind, he might juſtly have expected to have them readily ſatisfied. In his laſt ſeven or eight years, he was concealed in his beloved obſcurity, and poſſeſſed that ſolitude, which from

from his very childhood he had always moſt paſſionately deſired. Though he had frequent invitations to return into buſineſs, yet he never gave ear to any perſuaſions of profit or preferment, His viſits to the city and court were very few: his ſtays in town were only as a paſſenger, not an inhabitant. The places that he choſe for the ſeats of his declining life, were two or three villages on the bank of the Thames. During this receſs, his mind was rather exerciſed on what was to come, than what was paſſed; he ſuffered no more buſineſs nor cares of life to come near him, than what were enough to keep his ſoul awake, but not to diſturb it. Some few friends and books, a chearful heart, and innocent conſcience, were his conſtant companions. His poetry indeed he took with him, but he made that an anchorite as well as himſelf: he only dedicated it to the ſervice of his Maker, to deſcribe the great images of religion and virtue wherewith his mind abounded. And he employed his muſic

to no other uſe, than as his own DAVID did towards SAUL, by ſinging the praiſes of GOD and of Nature, to drive the evil ſpirit out of men's minds.

OF his works [*a*] that are publiſhed, it is hard to give one general character, becauſe of the difference of their ſubjects, and the various forms and diſtant times of their writing. Yet this is true of them all, that in all the ſeveral ſhapes of his ſtyle, there is ſtill very much of the likeneſs and impreſſion of the ſame mind; the ſame unaffected modeſty, and natural freedom, and eaſy vigour, and chearful paſſions, and innocent mirth, which appeared in all his manners. We have many things that he writ in two very unlike conditions, in the univerſity and the court. But in his poe-

[*a*] *Of his works*] The ill faith of a friend, in commending every thing alike, and without reſerve, would be very conſpicuous in all that follows to p. 41, if we did not reflect, that, what ſuch a poet, as Mr. Cowley, was capable of writing, ſuch a critic, as Dr. Sprat, may be ſuppoſed very honeſtly to approve.

try,

try, as well as his life, he mingled with excellent ſkill what was good in both ſtates. In his life, he joined the innocence and ſincerity of the ſcholar with the humanity and good behaviour of the courtier. In his poems, he united the ſolidity and art of the one with the gentility and gracefulneſs of the other.

If any ſhall think that he was not wonderfully curious in the choice and elegance of all his words: I will affirm with more truth on the other ſide, that he had no manner of affectation in them; he took them as he found them made to his hands; he neither went before, nor came after, the uſe of the age. He forſook the converſation, but never the language, of the city and court. He underſtood exceeding well all the variety and power of poetical numbers; and practiſed all ſorts with great happineſs. If his verſes in ſome places ſeem not as ſoft and flowing as ſome would have them, it was his choice, not his fault.

He knew that, in diverting men's minds, there ſhould be the ſame variety obſerved as in the proſpects of their eyes: where a rock, a precipice, or a riſing wave, is often more delightful, than a ſmooth even ground, or a calm ſea. Where the matter required it, he was as gentle as any man. But where higher virtues were chiefly to be regarded, an exact numeroſity was not then his main care. This may ſerve to anſwer thoſe who upbraid ſome of his pieces with roughneſs, and with more contractions than they are willing to allow. But theſe admirers of gentleneſs without ſinews, ſhould know that different arguments muſt have different colours of ſpeech: that there is a kind of variety of ſexes in poetry, as well as in mankind: that, as the peculiar excellence of the feminine kind is ſmoothneſs and beauty; ſo ſtrength is the chief praiſe of the maſculine.

He had a perfect maſtery in both the languages in which he writ: but each of them

them kept a juſt diſtance from the other; neither did his Latin make his Engliſh too old, nor his Engliſh make his Latin too modern. He excelled both in proſe and verſe; and both together have that perfection, which is commended by ſome of the ancients above all others, that they are very obvious to the conception, but moſt difficult in the imitation.

His fancy flowed with great ſpeed; and therefore it was very fortunate to him, that his judgement was equal to manage it. He never runs his reader nor his argument out of breath. He perfectly practiſes the hardeſt ſecret of good writing, to know when he has done enough. He always leaves off in ſuch a manner, that it appears it was in his power to have ſaid much more. In the particular expreſſions there is ſtill much to be applauded, but more in the diſpoſition and order of the whole. From thence there ſprings a new comelineſs, beſides the feature of each part. His

invention is powerful, and large as can be deſired. But it ſeems all to ariſe out of the nature of the ſubject, and to be juſt fitted for the thing of which he ſpeaks. If ever he goes far for it, he diſſembles his pains admirably well.

The variety of arguments that he has managed is ſo large, that there is ſcarce any particular of all the paſſions of men, or works of Nature and Providence, which he has paſſed by undeſcribed. Yet he ſtill obſerves the rules of decency with ſo much care, that whether he inflames his reader with the ſofter affections, or delights him with inoffenſive raillery, or teaches the familiar manners of life, or adorns the diſcoveries of philoſophy, or inſpires him with the heroic characters of charity and religion; to all theſe matters, that are ſo wide aſunder, he ſtill proportions a due figure of ſpeech, and a proper meaſure of wit. This indeed is moſt remarkable, that a man who was ſo conſtant and fixed in the

the moral ideas of his mind, ſhould yet be ſo changeable in his intellectual, and in both to the higheſt degree of excellence.

If there needed any excuſe to be made, that his love-verſes ſhould take up ſo great a ſhare in his works; it may be alledged, that they were compoſed when he was very young. But it is a vain thing to make any kind of apology for that ſort of writings. If devout or virtuous men will ſuperciliouſly forbid the minds of the young, to adorn thoſe ſubjects about which they are moſt converſant, they would put them out of all capacity of performing graver matters, when they come to them. For the exerciſes of all mens wits muſt be always proper for their age, and never too much above it: and by practice and uſe in lighter arguments, they grow up at laſt to excel in the moſt weighty. I am not therefore aſhamed to commend Mr. Cowley's Miſtreſs. I only except one or two expreſſions, which I wiſh I could have pre-

vailed with thoſe that had the right of the other edition, to have left out. But of all the reſt I dare boldly pronounce, that never yet ſo much was written on a ſubject ſo delicate, that can leſs offend the ſevereſt rules of morality. The whole paſſion of love is inimitably deſcribed, with all its mighty train of hopes, and joys, and diſquiets. Beſides this amorous tenderneſs, I know not how, in every copy, there is ſomething of more uſeful knowledge very naturally and gracefully inſinuated; and every where there may be ſomething found, to inform the minds of wiſe men as well as to move the hearts of young men or women.

THE occaſion of his falling on the Pindaric way of writing, was his accidental meeting with PINDAR's works, in a place where he had no other books to direct him [*b*]. Having then conſidered at leiſure

[*b*] —*direct him*] So it ſtands in all the editions I have ſeen. But the proper word ſeems to be—*divert*.

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the height of his invention, and the majeſty of his ſtyle, he tried immediately to imitate it in Engliſh. And he performed it without the danger that HORACE preſaged to man who ſhould dare to attempt it.

IF any are diſpleaſed at the boldneſs of his metaphors, and length of his digreſſion, they contend not againſt Mr. COWLEY, but PINDAR himſelf; who was ſo much reverenced by all antiquity, that the place of his birth was preſerved as ſacred, when his native city was twice deſtroyed by the fury of two conquerors. If the irregularity of the number diſguſt them, they may obſerve that this very thing makes that kind of poeſy fit for all manner of ſubjects: for the pleaſant, the grave, the amorous, the heroic, the philoſophical, the moral, the divine. Beſides this, they will find, that the frequent alteration of the rhythm and feet affects the mind with a more various delight, while it is ſoon apt to be tired by the ſettled pace of any

one conſtant meaſure. But that for which I think this inequality of number is chiefly to be preferred, is its near affinity with proſe: from which all other kinds of Engliſh verſe are ſo far diſtant, that it is very ſeldom found that the ſame man excels in both ways. But now this looſe and unconfined meaſure has all the grace and harmony of the moſt confined. And withal, it is ſo large and free, that the practice of it will only exalt, not corrupt, our proſe: which is certainly the moſt uſeful kind of writing of all others: for it is the ſtyle of all buſineſs and converſation.

Besides this imitating of Pindar, which may perhaps be thought rather a new ſort of writing, than a reſtoring of an ancient; he has alſo been wonderfully happy, in tranſlating many difficult parts of the nobleſt poets of antiquity. To perform this according to the dignity of the attempt, he had, as it was neceſſary he ſhould have, not only the elegance of both the

the languages, but the true ſpirit of both the poetries. This way of leaving verbal tranſlations, and chiefly regarding the ſenſe and genius of the author, was ſcarce heard of in England, before this preſent age, I will not preſume to ſay, that Mr. Cowley was the abſolute inventor of it. Nay, I know that others had the good luck to recommend it firſt in print. Yet I appeal to you, Sir, whether he did not conceive it, and diſcourſe of it, and practiſe it, as ſoon as any man.

His Davideis was wholly written in ſo young an age; that, if we ſhall reflect on the vaſtneſs of the argument, and his manner of handling it, he may ſeem like one of the miracles that he there adorns, like a boy attempting Goliah. I have often heard you declare, that he had finiſhed the greateſt part of it, while he was yet a young ſtudent at Cambridge. This perhaps may be the reaſon, that in ſome few places, there is more youthfulneſs and redundance of fancy

fancy than his riper judgement would have allowed. I know, Sir, you will give me leave to uſe this liberty of cenſure; for I do not here pretend to a profeſſed panegyric, but rather to give a juſt opinion concerning him. But for the main of it, I will affirm, that it is a better inſtance and beginning of a divine poem, than I ever yet ſaw in any language. The contrivance is perfectly ancient, which is certainly the true form of heroic poetry, and ſuch as was never yet outdone by any new devices of modern wits. The ſubject was truly divine, even according to God's own heart. The matter of his invention, all the treaſures of knowledge and hiſtories in the Bible. The model of it comprehended all the learning of the Eaſt. The characters, lofty and various: the numbers, firm and powerful: the digreſſions, beautiful and proportionable: the deſign, to ſubmit mortal wit to heavenly truths: in all there is an admirable mixture of human virtues and paſſions, with religious raptures.

THE truth is, Sir, methinks, in other matters, his wit excelled moſt other mens: but in his moral and divine works, it outdid itſelf. And no doubt it proceeded from this cauſe; that in other lighter kinds of poetry, he chiefly repreſented the humours and affections of others; but in theſe he ſat to himſelf, and drew the figure of his own mind. I know it has been objected againſt him, by ſome moroſe zealots, that he has done an injury to the Scripture, by ſprinkling all his works with many alluſions and ſimilitudes that he took out of the Bible. But to theſe men it were a ſufficient reply, to compare their own practice with his, in this particular. They make uſe of Scripture phraſes and quotations, in all their common diſcourſe. They employ the words of Holy Writ, to countenance the extravagance of their own opinions and affections. And why then might not he take the liberty to fetch from thence ſome ornament,

ornament, for the innocent paſſions, and natural truths, and moral virtues, which he deſcribes ?

THIS is confutation enough to that ſort of men. As to the thing itſelf, it is ſo far from being a debaſing of divinity, to make ſome parts of it the ſubjects of our fancy, that it is a ſure way to eſtabliſh it familiarly on the hearts of the people, and to give it a durable impreſſion on the minds of wiſe men. Of this we have a powerful inſtance amongſt the ancients. For their wit has laſted much longer than the practice of any of their religions. And the very memory of moſt of their divine worſhip had periſhed, if it had not been expreſſed and preſerved by their poets. But Mr. COWLEY himſelf did of all men living abhor the abuſe of Scripture by licentious raillery; which ought not only to be eſteemed the meaneſt kind of wit, but the worſt ſort of ill-manners. This perhaps ſome men would be loth to hear proved,

proved, who practiſe it under the falſe title of a genteel quality: but the truth of it is unqueſtionable. For the ordinary ill-breeding is only an indecence and offence againſt ſome particular cuſtom, or geſture, or behaviour in uſe. But this prophaneneſs is a violation of the very ſupport of human ſociety, and a rudeneſs againſt the beſt manners that all mankind can practiſe, which is, a juſt reverence of the Supreme Power of all the world.

In his Latin poems, he has expreſſed to admiration, all the numbers of verſe, and figures of poeſy, that are ſcattered up and down amongſt the ancients. There is hardly to be found in them all any good faſhion of ſpeech, or colour of meaſure, but he has comprehended it, and given inſtances of it, according as his ſeveral arguments required either a majeſtic ſpirit, or a paſſionate, or a pleaſant. This is the more extraordinary, in that it was never yet performed by any ſingle poet of the

ancient Romans themſelves. They had the language natural to them, and ſo might eaſily have moulded it into what form or humour they pleaſed: yet it was their conſtant cuſtom, to confine all their thoughts and practice to one or two ways of writing, as deſpairing ever to compaſs all together. This is evident, in thoſe that excelled in odes and ſongs, in the comical, tragical, epical, elegiacal, or ſatyrical way. And this perhaps occaſioned the firſt diſtinction and number of the Muſes. For they thought the taſk too hard for any one of them, though they fancied them to be goddeſſes. And therefore they divided it among them all; and only recommended to each of them, the care of a diſtinct character of poetry and muſic.

THE occaſion of his chuſing the ſubject of his ſix books of plants, was this: when he returned into England, he was adviſed to diſſemble the main intention of his coming over, under the diſguiſe of applying

plying himſelf to ſome ſettled profeſſion. And that of phyſic was thought moſt proper. To this purpoſe, after many anatomical diſſections, he proceeded to the conſideration of Simples; and having furniſhed himſelf with books of that nature, he retired into a fruitful part of Kent, where every field and wood might ſhew him the real figures of thoſe plants of which he read. Thus he ſpeedily maſtered that part of the art of medicine. But then, as one of the ancients did before him in the ſtudy of the law, inſtead of employing his ſkill for practice and profit, he preſently digeſted it into that form which we behold.

THE two firſt books treat of Herbs, in a ſtyle reſembling the elegies of Ovid and Tibullus, in the ſweetneſs and freedom of the verſe; but excelling them in the ſtrength of the fancy, and vigour of the ſenſe. The third and fourth diſcourſe of Flowers in all the variety of CATULLUS and HORACE's numbers: for the laſt of

which authors he had a peculiar reverence, and imitated him, not only in the ſtately and numerous pace of his odes and epodes, but in the familiar eaſineſs of his epiſtles and ſpeeches. The two laſt ſpeak of Trees, in the way of VIRGIL's Georgics. Of theſe the ſixth book is wholly dedicated to the honour of his country. For, making the Britiſh Oak to preſide in the aſſembly of the foreſt trees, upon that occaſion he enlarges on the hiſtory of our late troubles, the King's affliction and return, and the beginning of the Dutch war: and manages all in a ſtyle, that (to ſay all in a word) is equal to the greatneſs and valour of the Engliſh nation.

I TOLD you, Sir, that he was very happy in the way of HORACE's ſpeeches. But of this there are but two inſtances preſerved: that part of an epiſtle to Mr. CRESWEL, with which he concludes his preface to his book of plants: and that copy which is written to yourſelf. I confeſs,

feſs, I heartily wiſh he had left more examples behind him of this kind: becauſe I eſteem it to be one of the beſt and moſt difficult, of all thoſe that antiquity has taught us. It is certainly the very original of true raillery; and differs as much from ſome of the other Latin ſatyrs, as the pleaſant reproofs of a gentleman, from the ſeverity of a ſchool-maſter. I know ſome men diſapprove it, becauſe the verſe ſeems to be looſe, and near to the plainneſs of common diſcourſe. But that which was admired by the court of Auguſtus, never ought to be eſteemed flat, or vulgar. And the ſame judgement ſhould be made of mens ſtyles, as of their behaviour and carriage: wherein that is moſt courtly, and hardeſt to be imitated, which conſiſts of a natural eaſineſs and unaffected grace, where nothing ſeems to be ſtudied, yet every thing is extraordinary.

THIS familiar way of verſe puts me in mind of one kind of proſe wherein Mr.

Cowley was excellent; and that is, his letters to his private friends. In theſe he always expreſſed the native tenderneſs and innocent gaiety of his mind. I think, Sir, you and I have the greateſt collection of this ſort. But I know you agree with me, that nothing of this nature ſhould be publiſhed: and herein you have always conſented to approve of the modeſt judgement of our countrymen, above the practice of ſome of our neighbours, and chiefly of the French. I make no manner of queſtion, but the Engliſh at this time are infinitely improved in this way, above the ſkill of former ages; nay, of all countries round about us, that pretend to greater eloquence. Yet they have been always judiciouſly ſparing, in printing ſuch compoſures, while ſome other witty nations have tired all their preſſes and readers with them. The truth is, the letters that paſs between particular friends, if they are written as they ought to be, can ſcarce ever be fit to ſee the light. They ſhould not conſiſt of fulſome compliments,

pliments, or tedious politics, or elaborate elegancies, or general fancies. But they ſhould have a native clearneſs and ſhortneſs, a domeſtical plainneſs, and a peculiar kind of familiarity; which can only affect the humour of thoſe to whom they were intended. The very ſame paſſages, which make writings of this nature delightful amongſt friends, will loſe all manner of taſte when they come to be read by thoſe that are indifferent. In ſuch letters the ſouls of men ſhould appear undreſſed; and in that negligent habit, they may be fit to be ſeen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad into the ſtreet.

THE laſt pieces, that we have from his hands, are diſcourſes, by way of eſſays, upon ſome of the graveſt ſubjects that concern the contentment of a virtuous mind. Theſe he intended as a real character of his own thoughts, upon the point of his retirement. And accordingly you may obſerve, that in the proſe of them, there is little curioſity

of ornament[c]; but they are written in a lower and humbler ſtyle than the reſt, and, as an unfeigned image of his ſoul ſhould be drawn, without flattery. I do not ſpeak this to their diſadvantage. For the true perfection of wit is, to be pliable to all occaſions, to walk or fly, according to the nature of every ſubject. And there is, no doubt, as much art, to have only plain conceptions on ſome arguments, as there is in others to have extraordinary flights.

To theſe, that he has here left ſcarce finiſhed, it was his deſign to have added many others. And a little before his death, he communicated to me his reſolutions, to have dedicated them all to my Lord St. Albans, as a teſtimony of his entire reſpects to him; and a kind of apology for having left human affairs, in the ſtrength of his age, while he might ſtill have been ſerviceable to his country. But, though he

[c]—*little curioſity of ornament*] i. e. no quaintneſs of conceit, and no affectation of language.

was

was prevented in this purpoſe by this death, yet it becomes the office of a friend to make good his intentions. I therefore here preſume to make a preſent of them to his Lordſhip. I doubt not but, according to his uſual humanity, he will accept this imperfect legacy, of the man whom he long honoured with his domeſtic converſation. And I am confident his Lordſhip will believe it to be no injury to his fame, that in theſe papers my Lord ST. ALBANS and Mr. COWLEY's name ſhall be read together by poſterity.

I MIGHT, Sir, have made a longer diſcourſe of his writings, but that I think it fit to direct my ſpeech concerning him by the ſame rule by which he was wont to judge of others. In his eſteem of other men, he conſtantly preferred the good temper of their minds, and honeſty of their actions, above all the excellencies of their eloquence or knowledge. The ſame courſe I will take in his praiſe, which chiefly ought

ought to be fixed on his life. For that, he deſerves more applauſe from the moſt virtuous men, than for his other abilities he ever obtained from the learned.

He had indeed a perfect natural goodneſs, which neither the uncertainties of his condition, nor the largeneſs of his wit, could pervert. He had a firmneſs and ſtrength of mind, that was of proof againſt the art of poetry itſelf. Nothing vain or fantaſtical, nothing flattering or inſolent, appeared in his humour. He had a great integrity and plainneſs of manners; which he preſerved to the laſt, though much of his time was ſpent in a nation, and way of life, that is not very famous for ſincerity. But the truth of his heart was above the corruption of ill examples: and therefore the ſight of them rather confirmed him in the contrary virtues.

There was nothing affected or ſingular in his habit, or perſon, or geſture. He underſtood the forms of good-breeding enough

to

to practiſe them without burdening himſelf or others. He never oppreſſed any man's parts, nor ever put any man out of countenance. He never had any emulation for fame, or contention for profit with any man. When he was in buſineſs, he ſuffered others importunities with much eaſineſs: when he was out of it, he was never importunate himſelf. His modeſty and humility were ſo great, that, if he had not had many other equal virtues, they might have been thought diſſimulation.

His converſation was certainly of the moſt excellent kind; for it was ſuch as was rather admired by his familiar friends, than by ſtrangers at firſt ſight. He ſurprized no man at firſt with any extraordinary appearance: he never thruſt himſelf violently into the good opinion of his company. He was content to be known by leiſure and by degrees: and ſo the eſteem, that was conceived of him, was better grounded and more laſting.

In

In his ſpeech, neither the pleaſantneſs excluded gravity, nor was the ſobriety of it inconſiſtent with delight. No man parted willingly from his diſcourſe: for he ſo ordered it, that every man was ſatisfied that he had his ſhare. He governed his paſſions with great moderation. His virtues were never troubleſome or uneaſy to any. Whatever he diſliked in others, he only corrected it by the ſilent reproof of a better practice.

His wit was ſo tempered, that no man had ever reaſon to wiſh it had been leſs; he prevented other men's ſeverity upon it by his own: he never willingly recited any of his writings. None but his intimate friends ever diſcovered he was a great poet, by his diſcourſe. His learning was large and profound, well compoſed of all ancient and modern knowledge. But it ſat exceeding cloſe and handſomely upon him: it was not emboſſed on his mind, but enamelled.

He

He never guided his life by the whiſpers or opinions of the world: yet he had a great reverence for a good reputation. He hearkened to fame, when it was a juſt cenſurer: but not when an extravagant babler. He was a paſſionate lover of liberty and freedom from reſtraint both in actions and words: but what honeſty others receive from the direction of laws, he had by native inclination; and he was not beholding to other men's wills, but to his own, for his innocence.

He performed all his natural and civil duties with admirable tenderneſs. Having been born after his father's death, and bred up under the diſcipline of his mother, he gratefully acknowledged her care of his education to her death, which was in the eightieth year of her age. For his three brothers he always maintained a conſtant affection. And having ſurvived the two firſt, he made the third his heir. In his long

long dependance on my Lord ST. ALBANS, there never happened any manner of difference between them: except a little at laſt, becauſe he would leave his ſervice; which only ſhewed the innocence of the ſervant, and the kindneſs of the maſter. His friendſhips were inviolable. The ſame men with whom he was familiar in his youth, were his neareſt acquaintance at the day of his death. If the private courſe of his laſt years made him contract his converſation to a few, yet he only withdrew, not broke off, from any of the others.

HIS thoughts were never above nor below his condition. He never wiſhed his eſtate much larger. Yet he enjoyed what he had with all innocent freedom; he never made his preſent life uncomfortable, by undue expectations of future things. Whatever diſappointments he met with, they only made him underſtand fortune better, not repine at her the more: his Muſe indeed once complained, but never his mind.

He

He was accompliſhed with all manner of abilities for the greateſt buſineſs; if he would but have thought ſo himſelf.

If any thing ought to have been changed in his temper and diſpoſition; it was his earneſt affection for obſcurity and retirement. This, Sir, give me leave to condemn, even to you, who I know agreed with him in the ſame humour. I acknowledge he choſe that ſtate of life, not out of any poetical rapture, but upon a ſteady and ſober experience of human things. But, however, I cannot applaud it in him. It is certainly a great diſparagement to virtue, and learning itſelf, that thoſe very things which only make men uſeful in the world, ſhould incline them to leave it. This ought never to be allowed to good men, unleſs the bad had the ſame moderation, and were willing to follow them into the wilderneſs. But, if the one ſhall contend to get out of employment, while the other ſtrive to get into it, the affairs of mankind are like to be in

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ſo ill a poſture, that even the good men themſelves will hardly be able to enjoy their very retreats in ſecurity.

YET, I confeſs, if any deſerved to have this privilege, it ought to have been granted to him, as ſoon as any man living, upon conſideration of the manner in which he ſpent the liberty that he got. For he withdrew himſelf out of the crowd, with deſires of enlightening and inſtructing the minds of thoſe that remained in it. It was his reſolution in that ſtation to ſearch into the ſecrets of divine and human knowledge, and to communicate what he ſhould obſerve. He always profeſſed, that he went out of the world, as it was man's, into the ſame world, as it was nature's, and as it was God's. The whole compaſs of the creation, and all the wonderful effects of the divine wiſdom, were the conſtant proſpect of his ſenſes and his thoughts. And indeed he entered with great advantage on the ſtudies of nature, even as the firſt great men of antiquity

tiquity did, who were generally both poets and philoſophers. He betook himſelf to its contemplation, as well furniſhed with ſound judgement, and diligent obſervation, and good method to diſcover its myſteries, as with abilities to ſet it forth in all its ornaments.

This labour about natural ſcience was the perpetual and uninterrupted taſk of that obſcure part of his life. Beſides this, we had perſuaded him to look back into his former ſtudies, and to publiſh a diſcourſe concerning ſtyle. In this he had deſigned to give an account of the proper ſorts of writing, that were fit for all manner of arguments, to compare the perfections and imperfections of the authors of antiquity with thoſe of this preſent age, and to deduce all down to the particular uſe of the Engliſh genius and language. This ſubject he was very fit to perform: it being moſt proper for him to be the judge, who had been the beſt practiſer.

But he ſcarce lived to draw the firſt lines of it. All the footſteps that I can find remaining of it, are only ſome indigeſted characters of ancient and modern authors. And now for the future, I almoſt deſpair ever to ſee it well accompliſhed, unleſs you, Sir, would give me leave to name the man that ſhould undertake it.

But his laſt and principal deſign, was that which ought to be the principal to every wiſe man; the eſtabliſhing his mind in the faith he profeſſed. He was in his practice exactly obedient to the uſe and precepts of our church. Nor was he inclined to any uncertainty and doubt, as abhorring all contention in indifferent things, and much more in ſacred. But he beheld the diviſions of Chriſtendom: he ſaw how many controverſies had been introduced by zeal or ignorance, and continued by faction. He had therefore an earneſt intention of taking a review of the original principles of the primitive Church: believing that every

every true Chriſtian had no better means to ſettle his ſpirit, than that which was propoſed to ÆNEAS and his followers, to be the end of their wanderings,

" — antiquam exquirite matrem [*d*]."

THIS examination he purpoſed ſhould reach to our Saviour's and the Apoſtles lives, and their immediate ſucceſſors for four or five centuries, till intereſt and policy prevailed over devotion. He hoped to have abſolutely compaſſed it in three or four years; and when that was done, there to have fixed for ever, without any ſhaking or alteration in his judgement. Indeed it was a great damage to our church, that he lived not to perform it. For very much of the primitive light might have been expected from a mind that was endued with the primitive meekneſs and innocence. And beſides, ſuch a work, coming from one that was no divine, might have been very uſeful for this age: where-

[*d*] Virg. Æn. iii. 96.

in it is one of the principal cavils againſt religion, that it is only a matter of intereſt, and only ſupported for the gain of a particular profeſſion.

But alas! while he was framing theſe great things in his thoughts, they were unfortunately cut off, together with his life. His ſolitude, from the very beginning, had never agreed ſo well with the conſtitution of his body, as of his mind. The chief cauſe of it was, that, out of haſte to be gone away from the tumult and noiſe of the city, he had not prepared ſo healthful a ſituation in the country, as he might have done, if he had made a more leiſurable choice. Of this he ſoon began to find the inconvenience at Barn-Elms, where he was afflicted with a dangerous and lingering fever. After that, he ſcarce ever recovered his former health, though his mind was reſtored to its perfect vigour: as may be ſeen by his two laſt books of plants, that were written ſince that time, and may at leaſt be compared with the beſt of his other

other works. Shortly after his removal to Chertſea, he fell into another conſuming diſeaſe. Having languiſhed under this for ſome months, he ſeemed to be pretty well cured of its ill ſymptoms. But in the heat of the laſt ſummer, by ſtaying too long amongſt his labourers in the meadows; he was taken with a violent defluxion, and ſtoppage in his breaſt and throat. This he at firſt neglected, as an ordinary cold; and refuſed to ſend for his uſual phyſicians, till it was paſt all remedies; and ſo in the end, after a fortnight's ſickneſs, it proved mortal to him.

WHO can here, Sir, forbear exclaiming on the weak hopes and frail condition of human nature? For as long as Mr. COWLEY was purſuing the courſe of ambition, in an active life, which he ſcarce eſteemed his true life; he never wanted a conſtant health, and ſtrength of body. But as ſoon as ever he had found an opportunity of beginning indeed to live, and to enjoy himſelf in ſecu-

rity, his contentment was firſt broken by ſickneſs, and at laſt his death was occaſioned by his very delight in the country and the fields, which he had long fancied above all other pleaſures. But let us not grieve at this fatal accident upon his account, leſt we ſhould ſeem to repine at the happy change of his condition, and not to know that the loſs of a few years, which he might longer have lived, will be recompenſed by an immortal memory. If we complain, let it only be for our own ſakes: that in him we are at once deprived of the greateſt natural and improved abilities, of the uſefulleſt converſation, of the faithfulleſt friendſhip, of a mind that practiſed the beſt virtues itſelf, and a wit that was beſt able to recommend them to others.

His body was attended to Weſtminſter Abbey by a great number of perſons of the moſt eminent quality, and followed with the praiſes of all good and learned men. It lies near the aſhes of Chaucer

and SPENSER, the two moſt famous Engliſh poets of former times. But whoever would do him right, ſhould not only equal him to the principal ancient writers of our own nation, but ſhould alſo rank his name amongſt the authors of the true antiquity, the beſt of the Greeks and Romans.—In that place there is a monument deſigned for him, by my Lord Duke of BUCKINGHAM, in teſtimony of his affection. And the King himſelf was pleaſed to beſtow on him the beſt epitaph, when, upon the news of his death, his Majeſty declared [e]. *That Mr.* COWLEY *had not left a better man behind him in England.*

THIS, Sir, is the account that I thought fit to preſent the world concerning him. Perhaps it may be judged, that I have ſpent too many words on a private man, and a ſcholar: whoſe life was not remark-

[e]—*his Majeſty declared*, &c.] Which only ſhews, that the curſe of PERSIUS had fallen upon that prince—"Virtutem videant, intabeſcantque relictâ." Sat. iii. 35.

able for ſuch a variety of events, as are wont to be the ornaments of this kind of relations. I know it is the cuſtom of the world, to prefer the pompous hiſtories of great men, before the greateſt virtues of others, whoſe lives have been led in a courſe leſs illuſtrious. This indeed is the general humour. But I believe it to be an error in mens judgements. For certainly that is a more profitable inſtruction, which may be taken from the eminent goodneſs of men of lower rank, than that which we learn from the ſplendid repreſentations of the battles, and victories, and buildings, and ſayings, of great commanders and princes. Such ſpecious matters, as they are ſeldom delivered with fidelity, ſo they ſerve but for the imitation of a very few, and rather make for the oſtentation than the true information of human life. Whereas it is from the practice of men equal to ourſelves, that we are more naturally taught how to command our paſſions, to direct our knowledge, and to govern our actions,

For this reaſon, I have ſome hope, that a character of Mr. Cowley may be of good advantage to our nation. For what he wanted in titles of honour and the gifts of fortune, was plentifully ſupplied by many other excellencies, which make perhaps leſs noiſe, but are more beneficial for example. This, Sir, was the principal end of this long diſcourſe. Beſides this, I had another deſign it it, that only concerns ourſelves; that, having this picture of his life ſet before us, we may ſtill keep him alive in our memories, and by this means may have ſome ſmall reparation for our inexpreſſible loſs by his death. Sir, I am,

Your moſt humble,

and moſt affectionate ſervant,

T. SPRAT.

ELEGIA DEDICATORIA,

AD

ILLUSTRISSIMAM ACADEMIAM CANTABRIGIENSEM.

HOC tibi de nato, ditiſſima mater, egeno
Exiguum immenſi pignus amoris habe.
Heu, meliora tibi depromere dona volentes
Aſtringit gratas parcior arca manus.
Túne tui poteris vocem hìc agnoſcere nati
Tam malè formatam, diſſimilemque tuæ?
Túne hìc materni veſtigia ſacra decoris,
Tu ſpeculum poteris hìc reperire tuum?
Poſt longum, dices, Coulëi, ſic mihi tempus?
Sic mihi ſperanti, perfide, multa redis?
Quæ, dices, Sagæ Lemuréſque Deæque, nocentes,
Hunc mihi in infantis ſuppoſuêre loco?
At tu, ſancta parens, crudelis tu quoque, nati
Ne tractes dextrâ vulnera cruda rudi.

Hei

Hei mihi, quid fato genetrix accedis iniquo?
Sit ſors, ſed non ſis, ipſa, noverca mihi.
Si mihi natali Muſarum adoleſcere in arvo,
Si benè dilecto luxuriare ſolo,
Si mihi de doctâ licuiſſet pleniùs undâ
Haurire, ingentem ſi ſatiare ſitim,
Non ego degeneri dubitabilis ore redirem,
Nec legeres nomen fuſa rubore meum.
Scis benè, ſcis quæ me tempeſtas publica mundi
Raptatrix veſtro ſuſtulit è gremio,
Nec pede adhuc firmo, nec firmo dente, negati
Poſcentem querulo murmure lactis opem.
Sic quondam, aërium vento bellante per æquor,
Cum gravidum autumnum ſæva flagellat hyems,
Immatura ſuâ velluntur ab arbore poma,
Et vi victa cadunt; arbor & ipſa gemit.
Nondum ſuccus ineſt terræ generoſus avitæ,
Nondum ſol roſeo redditur ore pater.
O mihi jucundum Grantæ ſuper omnia nomen!
O penitùs toto corde receptus amor!
O pulcræ ſine luxu ædes, vitæque beatæ,
Splendida paupertas, ingenuúſque decor!
O chara ante alias, magnorum nomine regum
Digna domus! Trini nomine digna Dei!
O nimium Cereris cumulati munere campi,
Poſthabitis Ennæ quos colit illa jugis!
O ſacri fontes! & ſacræ vatibus umbræ,
Quas recreant avium Pieridúmque chori!

O Camus! Phœbo nullus quo gratior amnis!
Amnibus auriferis invidioſus inops!
Ah mihi ſi veſtræ reddat bona gaudia ſedis,
Detque Deus doctâ poſſe quiete frui!
Qualis eram, cum me tranquillâ mente ſedentem
Vidiſti in ripâ, Came ſerene, tuâ;
Mulcentem audîſti puerili flumina cantu;
Ille quidèm immerito, ſed tibi gratus erat.
Nam, memini ripâ cum tu dignatus utrâque,
Dignatum eſt totum verba referre nemus.
Tunc liquidis tacitiſque ſimul mea vita diebus,
Et ſimilis veſtræ candida fluxit aquæ.
At nunc cœnoſæ luces, atque obice multo
Rumpitur ætatis turbidus ordo meæ.
Quid mihi Sequanâ opus, Tameſisve aut Thybridis unda?
Tu potis es noſtram tollere, Came, ſitim.
Felix, qui nunquam plus uno viderit amne!
Quique eadem Salicis littora more colit!
Felix, qui non tentatus ſordeſcere mundus,
Et cui pauperies nota nitere poteſt!
Tempore cui nullo miſera experientia conſtat,
Ut res humanas ſentiat eſſe nihil!
At nos exemplis fortuna inſtruxit opimis,
Et documentorum ſatque ſupérque dedit.
Cum capite avulſum diadema, infractáque ſceptra,
Contuſáſque hominum ſorte minante minas,

Parcarum

Parcarum ludos, & non tractabile fatum,
Et versas fundo vidimus orbis opes.
Quis poterit fragilem post talia credere puppim
Infami scopulis naufragiisque mari?
Tu quoque in hoc terræ tremuisti, Academia, motu
(Nec frustrà) atque ædes contremuêre tuæ:
Contremuêre ipsæ pacatæ Palladis acres;
Et timuit fulmen laurea sancta novum.
Ah quanquam iratum, pestem hanc avertere numen,
Nec saltem bellis ista licere, velit!
Nos, tua progenies, pereamus; & ecce, perimus!
In nos jus habeat: jus habet omne malum.
Tu stabilis brevium genus immortale nepotum
Fundes; nec tibi mors ipsa superstes erit:
Semper plena manens uteri de fonte perenni
Formosas mittes ad mare mortis aquas.
Sic Venus humanâ quondam, Dea saucia dextrâ,
(Namque solent ipsis bella nocere Deis)
Imploravit opem superûm, questúsque cievit,
Tinxit adorandus candida membra cruor.
Quid quereris? contemne breves secura dolores:
Nam tibi ferre necem vulnera nulla valent.

THE

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO His EDITION in Folio, 1656.

AT my return lately into England [*f*], I met by great accident (for ſuch I account it to be, that any copy of it ſhould be extant any where ſo long, unleſs at his houſe who printed it) a book entituled, *The Iron Age*, and publiſhed under my name, during the time of my abſence. I wondered very much how one who could be ſo fooliſh to write ſo ill verſes, ſhould yet be ſo wiſe to ſet them forth as another man's rather than his own; though perhaps he might have made a better choice, and not fathered the baſtard upon ſuch

[*f*] In 1656.

a perſon,

a perſon, whoſe ſtock of reputation is, I fear, little enough for maintenance of his own numerous legitimate off-ſpring of that kind. It would have been much leſs injurious, if it had pleaſed the author to put forth ſome of my writings under his own name, rather than his own under mine: he had been in that a more pardonable plagiary, and had done leſs wrong by robbery, than he does by ſuch a bounty; for nobody can be juſtified by the imputation even of another's merit; and our own coarſe cloaths are like to become us better than thoſe of another man, though never ſo rich: but theſe, to ſay the truth, were ſo beggarly, that I myſelf was aſhamed to wear them. It was in vain for me, that I avoided cenſure by the concealment of my own writings, if my reputation could be thus executed *in effigie*; and impoſſible it is for any good name to be in ſafety, if the malice of witches have the power to conſume and deſtroy it in an image of their own making. This indeed was ſo

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ill made, and ſo unlike, that I hope the charm took no effect. So that I eſteem myſelf leſs prejudiced by it, than by that which has been done to me ſince, almoſt in the ſame kind; which is, the publication of ſome things of mine without my conſent or knowledge, and thoſe ſo mangled and imperfect, that I could neither with honour acknowledge, nor with honeſty quite diſavow them.

Of which ſort, was a comedy called *The Guardian*, printed in the year 1650; but made and acted before the Prince, in his paſſage through Cambridge towards York, at the beginning of the late unhappy war; or rather neither made nor acted, but rough-drawn only, and repeated; for the haſte was ſo great, that it could neither be reviſed or perfected by the author, nor learned without-book by the actors, nor ſet forth in any meaſure tolerably by the officers of the college. After the repreſentation (which, I confeſs, was ſomewhat

of the lateſt) I began to look it over, and changed it very much, ſtriking out ſome whole parts, as that of the poet and the ſoldier; but I have loſt the copy, and dare not think it deſerves the pains to write it again, which makes me omit it in this publication, though there be ſome things in it which I am not aſhamed of, taking the excuſe of my age and ſmall experience in human converſation when I made it. But, as it is, it is only the haſty firſt-ſitting of a picture, and therefore like to reſemble me accordingly.

From this which has happened to myſelf, I began to reflect on the fortune of almoſt all writers, and eſpecially poets, whoſe works (commonly printed after their deaths) we find ſtuffed out, either with counterfeit pieces, like falſe money put in to fill up the bag, though it add nothing to the ſum; or with ſuch, which, though of their own coin, they would have called in themſelves, for the baſeneſs of the allay: whether

whether this proceed from the indiſcretion of their friends, who think a vaſt heap of ſtones or rubbiſh a better monument than a little tomb of marble, or by the unworthy avarice of ſome ſtationers, who are content to diminiſh the value of the author, ſo they may increaſe the price of the book; and, like vintners, with ſophiſticate mixtures, ſpoil the whole veſſel of wine, to make it yield more profit. This has been the caſe with SHAKESPEAR, FLETCHER, JONSON, and many others; part of whoſe poems I ſhould take the boldneſs to prune and lop away, if the care of replanting them in print did belong to me [g]: neither would I make any ſcruple to cut off from ſome the unneceſſary young ſuckers, and from others the old withered branches; for a great wit is no more tied to live in a vaſt volume, than in a gigantic body; on the contrary, it is commonly more vigorous, the leſs ſpace it

[g] The editor's apology for the liberty taken in this edition, is here made by the author himſelf.

animates. And, as STATIUS ſays of little TYDEUS [*b*],

——Totos infuſa per artus
Major in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus.

I am not ignorant, that, by ſaying this of others, I expoſe myſelf to ſome raillery, for not uſing the ſame ſevere diſcretion in my own caſe, where it concerns me nearer: But though I publiſh here more than in ſtrict wiſdom I ought to have done, yet I have ſuppreſt and caſt away more than I publiſh; and, for the eaſe of myſelf and others, have loſt, I believe too, more than both. And upon theſe conſiderations I have been perſuaded to overcome all the juſt repugnances of my own modeſty, and to produce theſe poems to the light and view of the world; not as a thing that I approved of in itſelf, but as a leſs evil, which I choſe rather than to ſtay till it were done for me by ſomebody elſe, either ſurreptitiouſly before, or avowedly af-

[*b*] Stat. Theb. l. i. 416.

ter,

ter, my death: and this will be the more excuſable, when the reader ſhall know in what reſpects he may look upon me as a dead, or at leaſt a dying perſon, and upon my Muſe in this action, as appearing, like the Emperor CHARLES the Fifth, and aſſiſting at her own funeral.

FOR, to make myſelf abſolutely dead in a poetical capacity, my reſolution at preſent is, never to exerciſe any more that faculty. It is, I confeſs, but ſeldom ſeen that the poet dies before the man; for, when we once fall in love with that bewitching art, we do not uſe to court it as a miſtreſs, but marry it as a wife, and take it for better or worſe, as an inſeparable companion of our whole life. But, as the marriages of infants do but rarely proſper, ſo no man ought to wonder at the diminution or decay of my affection to poeſy; to which I had contracted myſelf ſo much under age, and ſo much to my own prejudice in regard of thoſe more profitable

matches, which I might have made among the richer ſciences. As for the portion which this brings of fame, it is an eſtate (if it be any, for men are not oftener deceived in their hopes of widows, than in their opinion of, "Exegi monumentum "ære perennius—") that hardly ever comes in whilſt we are living to enjoy it, but is a fantaſtical kind of reverſion to our own ſelves: neither ought any man to envy poets this poſthumous and imaginary happineſs, ſince they find commonly ſo little in preſent, that it may be truly applied to them, which St. Paul ſpeaks of the firſt Chriſtians, "If their reward be in "this life, they are of all men the moſt "miſerable."

And, if in quiet and flouriſhing times they meet with ſo ſmall encouragement, what are they to expect in rough and troubled ones? If wit be ſuch a plant, that it ſcarce receives heat enough to preſerve it alive even in the ſummer of our cold climate,

climate, how can it chooſe but wither in a long and a ſharp winter? A warlike, various, and a tragical age is beſt to write of, but worſt to write in. And I may, though in a very unequal proportion, aſſume that to myſelf, which was ſpoken by TULLY to a much better perſon, upon occaſion of the civil wars and revolutions in his time "Sed in te intuens, Brute, doleo: "cujus in adoleſcentiam, per medias laudes, "quaſi quadrigis vehentem, tranſverſa in-"currit miſera fortuna reipublicæ [*i*]."

NEITHER is the preſent conſtitution of my mind more proper than that of the times for this exerciſe, or rather divertiſement. There is nothing that requires ſo much ſerenity and chearfulneſs of ſpirit; it muſt not be either overwhelmed with the cares of life, or overcaſt with the clouds of melancholy and ſorrow, or ſhaken and diſturbed with the ſtorms of injurious fortune; it muſt, like the halcyon, have fair

[*i*] Cic. de Clar. Orator. § 331.

weather to breed in. The ſoul muſt be filled with bright and delightful ideas, when it undertakes to communicate delight to others; which is the main end of poeſy. One may ſee through the ſtyle of Ovid de Triſt. the humbled and dejected condition of ſpirit with which he wrote it; there ſcarce remains any footſtep of that genius,

—quem nec Jovis ira, nec ignes [*k*], &c.

The cold of the country had ſtrucken through all his faculties, and benumbed the very feet of his verſes. He is himſelf, methinks, like one of the ſtories of his own Metamorphoſis; and, though there remain ſome weak reſemblances of OVID at Rome, it is but, as he ſays of NIOBE [*l*],

In vultu color eſt ſine ſanguine: lumina mœſtis
Stant immota genis: nihil eſt in imagine vivi.—
Flet tamen——

The truth is, for a man to write well, it is neceſſary to be in good humour; nei-

[*k*] Metam. l. xv. 871.
[*l*] Metam. l. vi. 304.

ther

ther is wit leſs eclipſed with the unquietneſs of mind, than beauty with the indiſpoſition of body. So that it is almoſt as hard a thing to be a poet in deſpight of fortune, as it is in deſpight of nature. For my own part, neither my obligations to the Muſes, nor expectations from them, are ſo great, as that I ſhould ſuffer myſelf on no conſiderations to be divorced, or that I ſhould ſay like HORACE [*m*],

Quiſquis erit vitæ, ſcribam, color.

I ſhall rather uſe his words in another place [*n*],

Vixi Camenis nuper idoneus,
Et militavi non ſine gloriâ:
Nunc arma, defunctúmque bello
Barbiton hic paries habebit.

And this reſolution of mine does the more befit me, becauſe my deſire has been for ſome years paſt (though the execution has been accidentally diverted) and does ſtill

[*m*] Hor. 2 Sat. i. 60.
[*n*] 3 Carm. Ode xxvi. "Vixi puellis," &c.

vehemently

vehemently continue, to retire myſelf to ſome of our American plantations, not to ſeek for gold, or inrich myſelf with the traffic of thoſe parts (which is the end of moſt men that travel thither; ſo that of theſe Indies it is truer than it was of the former,

Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos,
Per mare pauperiem fugiens—[o])

but to forſake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myſelf there in ſome obſcure retreat (but not without the conſolation of letters and philoſophy)

Oblitúſque meorum, obliviſcendus & illis—[p]

as my former author ſpeaks too, who has inticed me here, I know not how, into the pedantry of this heap of Latin ſentences. And I think Dr. DONNE's *Sun-dyal in a grave* is not more uſeleſs and ridiculous, than poetry would be in that retirement.

[o] Hor. 1 Ep. i. 45.
[p] Hor. 1 Ep. xi. 9.

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As this therefore is in a true ſenſe a kind of death to the Muſes, and a real literal quitting of this world; ſo, methinks, I may make a juſt claim to the undoubted privilege of deceaſed poets, which is, to be read with more favour than the living;

Tanti eſt ut placeam tibi, perire [q].

HAVING been forced, for my own neceſſary juſtification, to trouble the reader with this long diſcourſe of the reaſons why I trouble him alſo with all the reſt of the book; I ſhall only add ſomewhat concerning the ſeveral parts of it, and ſome other pieces, which I have thought fit to reject in this publication: as, firſt, all thoſe which I wrote at ſchool, from the age of ten years, till after fifteen; for even ſo far backward there remain yet ſome traces of me in the little footſteps of a child; which, though they were then looked upon as commendable extravagancies in a boy (men ſetting a value upon any kind of

[q] Martial. lib. viii. ep. 69.

fruit

fruit before the uſual ſeaſon of it) yet I would be loth to be bound now to read them all over myſelf; and therefore ſhould do ill to expect that patience from others. Beſides, they have already paſt through ſeveral editions, which is a longer life than uſes to be enjoyed by infants that are born before the ordinary terms. They had the good fortune then to find the world ſo indulgent (for, conſidering the time of their production, who could be ſo hard-hearted to be ſevere? that I ſcarce yet apprehend ſo much to be cenſured for them, as for not having made advances afterwards proportionable to the ſpeed of my ſetting out; and am obliged too in a manner by diſcretion to conceal and ſuppreſs them, as promiſes and inſtruments under my own hand, whereby I ſtood engaged for more than I have been able to perform; in which truly if I have failed, I have the real excuſe of the honeſteſt ſort of bankrupts, which is, to have been made unſolvable, not ſo much by their own negligence

ligence and ill-huſbandry, as by ſome notorious accidents and public diſaſters. In the next place, I have caſt away all ſuch pieces as I wrote during the time of the late troubles, with any relation to the differences that cauſed them; as, among others, three books of the civil war itſelf, reaching as far as the firſt battle of Newbury, where the ſucceeding misfortunes of the party ſtopt the work.

As for the enſuing book, it conſiſts of four parts. The firſt is a Miſcellany of ſeveral ſubjects, and ſome of them made when I was very young, which it is perhaps ſuperfluous to tell the reader: I know not by what chance I have kept copies of them; for they are but a very few in compariſon of thoſe which I have loſt; and I think they have no extraordinary virtue in them, to deſerve more care in preſervation, than was beſtowed upon their brethren; for which I am ſo little concerned, that I am aſhamed of the arrogancy of the word, when I ſaid, I had loſt them.

THE ſecond, is called, *The Miſtreſs*, or *Love-Verſes*; for ſo it is, that poets are ſcarce thought freemen of their company, without paying ſome duties, and obliging themſelves to be true to love. Sooner or later they muſt all paſs through that trial, like ſome Mahometan monks, that are bound by their order, once at leaſt in their life, to make a pilgrimage to Mecca:

> In furias ignemque ruunt: amor omnibus idem [r].

But we muſt not always make a judgement of their manners from their writings of this kind; as the Romaniſts uncharitably do of BEZA, for a few laſcivious ſonnets compoſed by him in his youth. It is not in this ſenſe that poeſy is ſaid to be a kind of painting; it is not the picture of the poet, but of things and perſons imagined by him. He may be in his own practice and diſpoſition a philoſopher, nay a Stoic, and yet

[r] Virg. Georg. iii. 244.

ſpeak

ſpeak ſometimes with the ſoftneſs of an amorous Sappho,

——ferat & rubus aſper amomum [s].

He profeſſes too much the uſe of fables (though without the malice of deceiving) to have his teſtimony taken even againſt himſelf. Neither would I here be miſunderſtood, as if I affected ſo much gravity, as to be aſhamed to be thought really in love. On the contrary, I cannot have a good opinion of any man, who is not at leaſt capable of being ſo. But I ſpeak it to excuſe ſome expreſſions (if ſuch there be) which may happen to offend the ſeverity of ſupercilious readers: for much exceſs is to be allowed in love, and even more in poetry; ſo we avoid the two unpardonable vices in both, which are obſcenity and profaneneſs, of which I am ſure, if my words be ever guilty, they have ill repreſented my thoughts and intentions. And if, notwithſtanding all

[s] Virg. Ecl. iii. 89.

this,

this, the lightneſs of the matter here diſpleaſe any body; he may find wherewithal to content his more ſerious inclinations in the weight and height of the enſuing arguments.

For, as for the Pindaric Odes (which is the third part), I am in great doubt whether they will be underſtood by moſt readers; nay, even by very many who are well enough acquainted with the common roads and ordinary tracts of poeſy. They either are, or at leaſt were meant to be, of that kind of ſtyle which Dion. Halicarnasseus calls, Μεϱαλοφυὲς καὶ ἁδρὸν μετὰ δεινότητος, and which he attributes to Alcæus: the digreſſions are many, and ſudden, and ſometimes long, according to the faſhion of all lyriques, and of Pindar above all men living. The figures are unuſual and bold, even to temerity, and ſuch as I durſt not have to do withal in any other kind of poetry: the numbers are various and irregular, and ſometimes (eſpecially ſome of

of the long ones) ſeem harſh and uncouth, if the juſt meaſures and cadences be not obſerved in the pronunciation. So that almoſt all their ſweetneſs and numeroſity (which is to be found, if I miſtake not, in the rougheſt, if rightly repeated) lies in a manner wholly at the mercy of the reader. I have briefly deſcribed the nature of theſe verſes, in the Ode entituled, *The Reſurrection:* and though the liberty of them may incline a man to believe them eaſy to be compoſed, yet the undertaker will find it otherwiſe—

—Ut ſibi quivis
Speret idem; ſudet multùm, fruſtráque laboret
Auſus idem [*t*].

I COME now to the laſt part, which is Davideis, or an heroical poem of the troubles of DAVID: which I deſigned into twelve books; not for the tribes ſake, but after the pattern of our maſter VIRGIL; and intended to cloſe all with that moſt

[*t*] Hor. A. P. 240.

poetical and excellent elegy of DAVID on the death of SAUL and JONATHAN: for I had no mind to carry him quite on to his anointing at Hebron, becauſe it is the cuſtom of heroic poets (as we ſee by the examples of HOMER and VIRGIL, whom we ſhould do ill to forſake to imitate others) never to come to the full end of their ſtory; but only ſo near, that every one may ſee it; as men commonly play not out the game, when it is evident that they can win it, but lay down their cards, and take up what they have won. This, I ſay, was the whole deſign, in which there are many noble and fertile arguments behind; as the barbarous cruelty of SAUL to the prieſts at Nob, the ſeveral flights and eſcapes of DAVID, with the manner of his living in the Wilderneſs, the funeral of SAMUEL, the love of ABIGAL, the ſacking of Ziglag, the loſs and recovery of DAVID's wives from the Amalekites, the witch of Endor, the war with the Philiſtines, and the battle of Gilboa; all

all which I meant to interweave, upon ſeveral occaſions, with moſt of the illuſtrious ſtories of the Old Teſtament, and to embelliſh with the moſt remarkable antiquities of the Jews and of other nations before or at that age.

But I have had neither leiſure hitherto, nor have appetite at preſent, to finiſh the work, or ſo much as to reviſe that part which is done, with that care which I reſolved to beſtow upon it, and which the dignity of the matter well deſerves. For what worthier ſubject could have been choſen, among all the treaſuries of paſt times, than the life of this young prince; who, from ſo ſmall beginnings, through ſuch infinite troubles and oppoſitions, by ſuch miraculous virtues and excellencies, and with ſuch incomparable variety of wonderful actions and accidents, became the greateſt monarch that ever ſat on the moſt famous throne of the whole earth? Whom ſhould a poet more juſtly ſeek to honour,

than the higheſt perſon who ever honoured his profeſſion? whom a Chriſtian poet, rather than the man after GOD's own heart, and the man who had that ſacred preeminence above all other princes, to be the beſt and mightieſt of that royal race from whence Chriſt himſelf, according to the fleſh, diſdained not to deſcend?

WHEN I conſider this, and how many other bright and magnificent ſubjects of the like nature the holy Scripture affords and proffers, as it were, to poeſy; in the wiſe managing and illuſtrating whereof the glory of God Almighty might be joined with the ſingular utility and nobleſt delight of mankind; it is not without grief and indignation that I behold that divine ſcience employing all her inexhauſtible riches of wit and eloquence, either in the wicked and beggarly flattery of great perſons, or the unmanly idolizing of fooliſh women, or the wretched affectation of ſcurril laughter, or at beſt on the confuſed antiquated

antiquated dreams of ſenſeleſs fables and metamorphoſes. Amongſt all holy and conſecrated things, which the devil ever ſtole and alienated from the ſervice of the Deity; as altars, temples, ſacrifices, prayers, and the like; there is none that he ſo univerſally, and ſo long uſurpt, as poetry. It is time to recover it out of the tyrant's hands, and to reſtore it to the kingdom of God, who is the father of it. It is time to baptize it in Jordan, for it will never become clean by bathing in the water of Damaſcus. There wants, methinks, but the converſion of that, and the Jews, for the accompliſhment of the kingdom of Chriſt. And as men, before their receiving of the faith, do not without ſome carnal reluctancies apprehend the bonds and fetters of it, but find it afterwards to be the trueſt and greateſt liberty: it will fare no otherwiſe with this art, after the regeneration of it; it will meet with wonderful variety of new, more beautiful, and more delightful objects; neither

will it want room, by being confined to heaven.

THERE is not ſo great a lye to be found in any poet, as the vulgar conceit of men, that lying is eſſential to good poetry. Were there never ſo wholeſome nouriſhment to be had (but alas, it breeds nothing but diſeaſes) out of theſe boaſted feaſts of love and fables; yet, methinks, the unalterable continuance of the diet ſhould make us nauſeate it: for it is almoſt impoſſible to ſerve up any new diſh of that kind. They are all but the cold-meats of the ancients, new-heated, and new ſet forth. I do not at all wonder that the old poets made ſome rich crops out of theſe grounds; the heart of the ſoil was not then wrought out with continual tillage: but what can we expect now, who come a gleaning, not after the firſt reapers, but after the very beggars? Beſides, though thoſe mad ſtories of the gods and heroes ſeem in themſelves ſo ridiculous;

culous; yet they were then the whole body (or rather chaos) of the theology of thoſe times. They were believed by all, but a few philoſophers, and perhaps ſome atheiſts; and ſerved to good purpoſe among the vulgar (as pitiful things as they are), in ſtrengthening the authority of law with the terrors of conſcience, and expectation of certain rewards and unavoidable puniſhments. There was no other religion; and therefore that was better than none at all. But to us, who have no need of them, to us, who deride their folly, and are wearied with their impertinencies; they ought to appear no better arguments for verſe, than thoſe of their worthy ſucceſſors, the knights errant. What can we imagine more proper for the ornaments of wit or learning in the ſtory of DEUCALION than in that of NOAH? Why will not the actions of SAMPSON afford as plentiful matter as the labours of HERCULES? Why is not JEPTHA's daughter as good a woman as IPHIGENIA? and the friendſhip of

DAVID and JONATHAN more worthy celebration than that of THESEUS and PERITHOUS? Does not the paſſage of MOSES and the Iſraelites into the Holy Land yield incomparably more poetical variety than the voyages of ULYSSES or ÆNEAS? Are the obſolete thread-bare tales of Thebes and Troy half ſo ſtored with great, heroical, and ſupernatural actions (ſince verſe will needs find or make ſuch), as the wars of JOSHUA, of the Judges, of DAVID, and divers others? Can all the transformations of the gods give ſuch copious hints to flouriſh and expatiate on, as the true miracles of Chriſt, or of his prophets and apoſtles? What do I inſtance in theſe few particulars? All the books of the Bible are either already moſt admirable and exalted pieces of poeſy, or are the beſt materials in the world for it.

YET, though they be in themſelves ſo proper to be made uſe of for this purpoſe; none but a good artiſt will know how to do

do it: neither muſt we think to cut and poliſh diamonds with ſo little pains and ſkill as we do marble. For, if any man deſign to compoſe a ſacred poem, by only turning a ſtory of the Scripture, like Mr. QUARLES's, or ſome other godly matter, like Mr. HEYWOOD of angels, into rhyme; he is ſo far from elevating of poeſy, that he only abaſes divinity. In brief, he who can write a prophane poem well, may write a divine one better; but he who can do that but ill, will do this much worſe. The ſame fertility of invention; the ſame wiſdom of diſpoſition; the ſame judgement in obſervance of decencies; the ſame luſtre and vigor of elocution; the ſame modeſty and majeſty of number; briefly, the ſame kind of habit, is required to both: only this latter allows better ſtuff; and therefore would look more deformedly, ill dreſt in it. I am far from aſſuming to myſelf to have fulfilled the duty of this weighty undertaking: but ſure I am, there is nothing yet in our

language

language (nor perhaps in any) that is in any degree anſwerable to the idea that I conceive of it. And I ſhall be ambitious of no other fruit from this weak and imperfect attempt of mine, but the opening of a way to the courage and induſtry of ſome other perſons, who may be better able to perform it thoroughly and ſucceſsfully.

THE

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO

THE CUTTER OF COLEMAN-STREET [u].

A COMEDY, called the Guardian, and made by me when I was very young, was acted formerly at Cambridge; and ſeveral times after, privately, during the troubles, as I am told, with good approbation, as it has been lately too at

[u] This comedy has conſiderable merit. The dialogue is eaſy enough, and many of the ſcenes pleaſant. And, though the ſubject be farcical, and the plot too much in the Spaniſh taſte of intrigue, I ſhould, perhaps, have inſerted the *Cutter of Coleman-ſtreet* in the preſent collection, if, agreeably to the plan and purpoſe of this publication, I could have found room for ſo long a work. However, the *Preface* could by no means be omitted, as it ſerves to let us into the writer's character, and is written, throughout, in his own ſpirit.

Dublin.

Dublin. There being many things in it which I diſliked, and finding myſelf for ſome days idle, and alone in the country, I fell upon the changing of it almoſt wholly, as now it is, and as it was played ſince at his Royal Highneſs's theatre under this new name. It met at the firſt repreſentation with no favourable reception; and I think there was ſomething of faction againſt it, by the early appearance of ſome mens diſapprobation before they had ſeen enough of it to build their diſlike upon their judgement. Afterwards it got ſome ground, and found friends, as well as adverſaries. In which condition I ſhould willingly let it die, if the main imputation under which it ſuffered had been ſhot only againſt my wit or art in theſe matters, and not directed againſt the tendereſt parts of human reputation, good-nature, good-manners, and piety itſelf.

The firſt clamour, which ſome malicious perſons raiſed, and made a great noiſe with,

with, was, that it was a piece intended for abuſe and ſatire againſt the King's party. Good God! againſt the King's party? After having ſerved it twenty years, during all the time of their misfortunes and afflictions; I muſt be a very raſh and imprudent perſon, if I choſe out that of their reſtitution to begin a quarrel with them. I muſt be too much a madman to be truſted with ſuch an edged tool as comedy. But firſt, why ſhould either the whole party (as it was once diſtinguiſhed by that name, which I hope is aboliſhed now by univerſal loyalty), or any man of virtue or honour in it, believe themſelves injured, or at all concerned, by the repreſentation of the faults and follies of a few, who in the general diviſion of the nation had crouded in among them? In all mixed numbers (which is the caſe of parties), nay, in the moſt entire and continued bodies, there are often ſome degenerated and corrupted parts, which may be caſt away from that, and even cut off from this unity, without

out any infection of ſcandal to the remaining body. The church of Rome, with all her arrogance, and her wide pretences of certainty in all truths, and exemption from all errors, does not clap on this enchanted armour of infallibility upon all her particular ſubjects, nor is offended at the reproof of her greateſt doctors. We are not, I hope, become ſuch Puritans ourſelves, as to aſſume the name of the congregation of the ſpotleſs. It is hard for any party to be ſo ill as that no good, impoſſible to be ſo good as that no ill, ſhould be found among them. And it has been the perpetual privilege of ſatire and comedy, to pluck their vices and follies, though not their perſons, out of the ſanctuary of any title. A cowardly ranting ſoldier, an ignorant charlatanical doctor, a fooliſh cheating lawyer, a ſilly pedantical ſcholar, have always been, and ſtill are, the principal ſubjects of all comedies, without any ſcandal given to thoſe honourable profeſſions, or even taken by their ſevereſt profeſſors.

And,

And, if any good phyſician or divine ſhould be offended with me here, for inveighing againſt a quack, or for finding Deacon Soaker too often in the butteries, my reſpect and reverence to their callings would make me troubled at their diſpleaſure, but I could not abſtain from taking them for very choleric and quarrelſome perſons. What does this therefore amount to, if it were true which is objected? But it is far from being ſo; for the repreſentation of two ſharks about the town (fellows merry and ingenious enough, and therefore admitted into better companies than they deſerve, yet withal two very ſcoundrels, which is no unfrequent character at London), the repreſentation, I ſay, of theſe as pretended officers of the Royal army, was made for no other purpoſe but to ſhow the world, that the vices and extravagances imputed vulgarly to the cavaliers, were really committed by aliens, who only uſurped that name, and endeavoured to cover the reproach of their indigency, or infamy of

their

their actions, with ſo honourable a title. So that the buſineſs was not here to correct or cut off any natural branches, tho' never ſo corrupted or luxuriant, but to ſeparate and caſt away that vermin, which, by ſticking ſo cloſe to them, had done great and conſiderable prejudice both to the beauty and fertility of the tree: and this is plainly ſaid, and as often inculcated, as if one ſhould write round about a ſign, *This is a dog*, *This is a dog*, out of over-much caution leſt ſome might happen to miſtake it for a lion.

THEREFORE, when this calumny could not hold (for the caſe is clear, and will take no colour), ſome others ſought out a ſubtler hint, to traduce me upon the ſame ſcore; and were angry, that the perſon whom I made a true gentleman, and one both of conſiderable quality and ſufferings in the royal party, ſhould not have a fair and noble character throughout, but ſhould ſubmit, in his great extremities, to wrong

his

his niece for his own relief. This is a refined exception, ſuch as I little forſaw, nor ſhould, with the dulneſs of my uſual charity, have found out againſt another man in twenty years. The truth is, I did not intend the character of a hero, one of exemplary virtue, and, as HOMER often terms ſuch men, unblameable, but an ordinary jovial gentleman, commonly called a good fellow, one not ſo conſcientious as to ſtarve rather than do the leaſt injury, and yet endowed with ſo much ſenſe of honour, as to refuſe, when that neceſſity was removed, the gain of five thouſand pounds, which he might have taken from his niece by the rigour of a forfeiture: and let the frankneſs of this latter generoſity ſo expiate for the former frailty, as may make us not aſhamed of his company; for, if his true metal is but equal to his allay, it will not indeed render him one of the fineſt ſort of men, but it will make him current, for aught I know, in any party that ever yet was in the world. If you be to chuſe

parts for a comedy out of any noble or elevated rank of perſons, the moſt proper for that work are the worſt of that kind. Comedy is humble of her nature, and has always been bred low, ſo that ſhe knows not how to behave herſelf with the great and accompliſhed. She does not pretend to the briſk and bold qualities of wine, but to the ſtomachal acidity of vinegar; and therefore is beſt placed among that ſort of people which the Romans call, *The lees of* ROMULUS. If I had deſigned here the celebration of the virtues of our friends, I would have made the ſcene nobler where I intended to erect their ſtatues. They ſhould have ſtood in odes, and tragedies, and epic poems (neither have I totally omitted thoſe great teſtimonies of my eſteem of them)—" Sed " nunc non erat his locus," &c.

AND ſo much for this little ſpiny objection, which a man cannot ſee without a magnifying-glaſs. The next is enough to knock

knock a man down, and accuſes me of no leſs than prophaneneſs. Prophane, to deride the hypocriſy of thoſe men whoſe ſkulls are not yet bare upon the gates ſince the public and juſt puniſhment of it? But there is ſome imitation of Scripture-phraſes: God forbid; there is no repreſentation of the true face of Scripture, but only of that vizard which theſe hypocrites (that is, by interpretation, actors with a vizard) draw upon it. Is it prophane to ſpeak of HARRISON's return to life again, when ſome of his friends really profeſſed their belief of it; and he himſelf had been ſaid to promiſe it? A man may be ſo imprudently ſcrupulous as to find prophaneneſs in any thing, either ſaid or written, by applying it under ſome ſimilitude or other to ſome expreſſions in Scripture. This nicety is both vain and endleſs. But I call God to witneſs, that, rather than one tittle ſhould remain among all my writings, which, according to my ſevereſt judgement, ſhould be found guilty of the crime objected, I

would myſelf burn and extinguiſh them all together. Nothing is ſo deteſtably lewd and wretchleſs as the deriſion of things ſacred; and would be in me more unpardonable than any man elſe, who have endeavoured to root out the ordinary weeds of poetry, and to plant it almoſt wholly with divinity. I am ſo far from allowing any looſe or irreverent expreſſions, in matters of that religion which I believe, that I am very tender in this point, even for the groſſeſt errors of conſcientious perſons; they are the propereſt object (methinks) both of our pity and charity too; they are the innocent and white ſectaries, in compariſon of another kind, who engraft pride upon ignorance, tyranny upon liberty, and upon all their hereſies, treaſon and rebellion. Theſe are principles ſo deſtructive to the peace and ſociety of mankind, that they deſerve to be purſued by our ſerious hatred; and the putting a maſk of ſanctity upon ſuch devils, is ſo ridiculous, that it ought to be expoſed to contempt

contempt and laughter. They are indeed prophane, who counterfeit the ſoftneſs of the voice of holineſs, to diſguiſe the roughneſs of the hands of impiety; and not they, who, with reverence to the thing which others diſſemble, deride nothing but their diſſimulation. If ſome piece of an admirable artiſt ſhould be ill copied, even to ridiculouſneſs, by an ignorant hand; and another painter ſhould undertake to draw that copy, and make it yet more ridiculous, to ſhew apparently the difference of the two works, and deformity of the latter; will not every man ſee plainly, that the abuſe is intended to the fooliſh imitation, and not to the excellent original? I might ſay much more, to confute and confound this very falſe and malicious accuſation; but this is enough, I hope, to clear the matter, and is, I am afraid, too much for a preface to a work of ſo little conſideration.

As for all other objections, which have been, or may be made againſt the invention

or elocution, or any thing elſe which comes under the critical juriſdiction; let it ſtand or fall as it can anſwer for itſelf, for I do not lay the great ſtreſs of my reputation upon a ſtructure of this nature, much leſs upon the ſlight reparations only of an old and unfaſhionable building. There is no writer but may fail ſometimes in point of wit; and it is no leſs frequent for the auditors to fail in point of judgement. I perceive plainly, by daily experience, that Fortune is miſtreſs of the theatre, as TULLY ſays it is of all popular aſſemblies. No man can tell ſometimes from whence the inviſible winds riſe that move them. There are a multitude of people, who are truly and only ſpectators at a play, without any uſe of their underſtanding; and theſe carry it ſometimes by the ſtrength of their numbers. There are others, who uſe their underſtandings too much; who think it a ſign of weakneſs and ſtupidity, to let any thing paſs by them unattacked, and that the honour of their judgements (as ſome brutals

brutals imagine of their courage) conſiſts in quarrelling with every thing. We are therefore wonderful wiſe men, and have a fine buſineſs of it, we, who ſpend our time in poetry: I do ſometimes laugh, and am often angry with myſelf, when I think on it; and if I had a ſon inclined by nature to the ſame folly, I believe I ſhould bind him from it, by the ſtricteſt conjurations of a paternal bleſſing. For what can be more ridiculous, than to labour to give men delight, whilſt they labour, on their part, more earneſtly, to take offence? To expoſe one's ſelf voluntarily and frankly to all the dangers of that narrow paſſage to unprofitable fame, which is defended by rude multitudes of the ignorant, and by armed troops of the malicious? If we do ill, many diſcover it, and all deſpiſe us; if we do well, but few men find it out, and fewer entertain it kindly. If we commit errors, there is no pardon; if we could do wonders, there would be but little thanks, and that too extorted from unwilling givers.

But ſome perhaps may ſay, Was it not always thus? do you expect a particular privilege, that was never yet enjoyed by any poet? were the ancient Grecian, or noble Roman authors, was Virgil himſelf, exempt from this poſſibility,

Qui melior multis, quàm tu, fuit, improbe, rebus [x];

who was, in many things, thy better far, thou impudent pretender; as was ſaid by Lucretius to a perſon, who took it ill that he was to die, though he had ſeen ſo many do it before him, who better deſerved immortality: and this is to repine at the natural condition of a living poet, as he did at that of a living mortal. I do not only acknowledge the pre-eminence of Virgil (whoſe footſteps I adore), but ſubmit to many of his Roman brethren; and I confeſs, that even they in their own times, were not ſo ſecure from the aſſaults of de-

[x] Lucr. iii. 1039.

traction

traction (though HORACE brags at laſt,

Jam dente minus mordeor invido [y];

but then the barkings of a few were drowned in the applauſe of all the reſt of the world, and the poiſon of their bitings extinguiſhed by the antidote of great rewards and great encouragements, which is a way of curing now out of uſe; and I really profeſs, that I neither expect, nor think I deſerve it. Indolency would ſerve my turn inſtead of pleaſure: but the caſe is not ſo well; for, though I comfort myſelf with ſome aſſurance of the favour and affection of very many candid and good-natured (and yet too judicious and even critical) perſons; yet this I do affirm, that from all which I have written I never received the leaſt benefit, or the leaſt advantage, but, on the contrary, have felt ſometimes the effects of malice and misfortune.

[y] 4 Carm. iii. 16.

POEMS
OF
MR. A. COWLEY.

I.
THE MOTTO.

Tentanda via eſt, &c. VIRG.

WHAT ſhall I do to be for ever known,
And make the age to come my own?
[a] * * * *
Hence all the flattering vanities, that lay
Nets of roſes in the way.
Hence the deſire of honours, or eſtate;
And all that is not above fate.
Hence love himſelf, that tyrant of my days,
Which intercepts my coming praiſe.

[a] Some lines of the original are left out.

Come,

Come, my beſt friends, my books, and lead me on;
'Tis time that I were gone.
Welcome, great Stagirite, and teach me now
All I was born to know.
Thy ſcholar's vict'ries thou doſt far out-do:
He conquer'd th' earth; the whole world, you[b].
Welcome, learn'd Cicero, whoſe bleſt tongue and wit
Preſerves Rome's greatneſs yet.
Thou art the firſt of orators; only he,
Who beſt can praiſe thee, next muſt be [c].
Welcome the Mantuan ſwan, Virgil the wiſe,
Whoſe verſe walks higheſt, but not flies[d].

[b] *He conquer'd th' earth; the whole world, you*] *Earth*, means this habitable globe; *world*, the ſyſtem of univerſal nature. But the compliment is not a little extravagant! like that of Mr. Pope to Newton—

"God ſaid, Let Newton be, and *all* was light"

—for which the Poet is very juſtly reprehended by his learned Commentator.

[c] ——*only he,*
Who beſt can praiſe thee, next muſt be.] i. e. he muſt be *only* next; for none but Cicero himſelf was equal to the ſubject. The poet glances at what Livy ſaid of the great Roman orator—"vir magnus, acer, memorabilis, et *in* "*cujus laudes ſequendas Cicerone laudatore opus fuerit.*" A fragment, preſerved by the elder Seneca.

[d] *Whoſe verſe walks higheſt, but not flies.*] i. e. which keeps within the limits of nature, and is ſublime without

Who

Who brought green poeſy to her perfect age;
And made that art, which was a rage.
Tell me, ye mighty three, what ſhall I do
To be like one of you.
But ye have climb'd the mountain's top, there ſit
On the calm flouriſhing head of it,
And, whilſt with wearied ſteps we upward go,
See us, and clouds below.

II.

O D E.

ON WIT.

I.

TELL me, O tell, what kind of thing is wit,
Thou, who maſter art of it.

being extravagant. Virgil's *epic* Muſe is here juſtly characterized: the *Lyric*, is a ſwan of another ſpecies, of which the poet ſays nobly, elſewhere—

" Lo, how th' obſequious wind and ſwelling air
" The Theban ſwan does upwards bear
" Into the walks of clouds, where he does play,
" And with extended wings opens his liquid way."

Pindaric Odes. *The praiſe of Pindar.*

For the firſt matter loves variety leſs;
Leſs women love't, either in love or dreſs [*e*].
A thouſand different ſhapes it bears,
Comely in thouſand ſhapes appears.
Yonder we ſaw it plain; and here 'tis now,
Like ſpirits in a place, we know not how.

2.

London, that vents of falſe ware ſo much ſtore,
In no ware deceives us more.
For men, led by the colour and the ſhape,
Like Zeuxes' birds, fly to the painted grape;
Some things do through our judgement paſs,
As through a multiplying glaſs.
And ſometimes if the object be too far,
We take a falling meteor for a ſtar.

3.

Hence 'tis, a wit, that greateſt word of fame,
Grows ſuch a common name.

[*e*] We ſhould now ſay, to avoid the diſagreeable contraction,—

"Leſs women love *it*, *or* in love, or dreſs."

—But our poet *affected* theſe contractions, and, if we may believe the writer of his life, fancied they gave a ſtrength and energy to his verſe. The truer reaſon for his uſe of them was, that he found them in faſhion.

And

And wits by our creation they become,
Juſt ſo, as titular biſhops made at Rome.
'Tis not a tale, 'tis not a jeſt
Admir'd with laughter at a feaſt,
Nor florid talk, which can that title gain;
The proofs of wit for ever muſt remain.

4.

'Tis not to force ſome lifeleſs verſes meet
With their five gouty feet.
All every where, like man's, muſt be the ſoul,
And reaſon the inferior powers controul.
Such were the numbers, which could call
The ſtones into the Theban wall.
Such miracles are ceas'd; and now we ſee
No towns or houſes [*f*] rais'd by poetry.

5.

Yet, 'tis not to adorn, and gild each part;
That ſhows more coſt, than art.
Jewels at noſe and lips but ill appear;
Rather, than all things, wit, let none be there.
Several lights will not be ſeen,
If there be nothing elſe between.

[*f*] *Houſes*] Here uſed in the double ſenſe of *houſes*, properly ſo called, and of *families*.

Men doubt, becauſe they ſtand ſo thick i'th' ſky,
If thoſe be ſtars, which paint the galaxy [g].

6.

'Tis not, when two like words make up one noiſe;
Jeſts for Dutch men, and Engliſh boys.
In which who finds out wit, the ſame may ſee
In anagrams and acroſtics, poetry.
Much leſs can that have any place
At which a virgin hides her face;
Such droſs the fire muſt purge away; 'tis juſt,
The author bluſh there, where the reader muſt.

7.

'Tis not ſuch lines as almoſt crack the ſtage,
When Bajazet begins to rage.

[g] This idea has been borrowed by Mr. Addiſon, and applied, with much elegance, to our poet himſelf. For, ſpeaking of Mr. Cowley's wit, he ſays—

" One glitt'ring thought no ſooner ſtrikes our eyes
" With ſilent wonder, but new wonders riſe:
" As in the milky way a ſhining white
" O'erflows the heav'ns with one continued light;
" That not a ſingle ſtar can ſhew his rays,
" Whilſt jointly all promote the common blaze."

Account of Engliſh poets, to Mr. H. S.

Nor

Nor a tall metaphor in the bombaſt way,
Nor the dry chips of ſhort-lung'd Seneca [*h*].
Nor upon all things to obtrude
And force ſome odd ſimilitude.
What is it then, which, like the power divine,
We only can by negatives define? [*i*]

III.

On the Death of Mr. JORDAN, Second Maſter at Weſtminſter-School.

HERE lies the maſter of my tender years,
The guardian of my parent's [*k*] hope and fears,

[*h*] —*ſhort-lung'd Seneca.*] Meaning his *ſhort* ſentences, as if he had not breath enough to ſerve him for longer—*anhelanti ſimilis*—Yet, in another ſenſe, he is, perhaps, the moſt *long-winded* author of antiquity. For, as Mr. Bayle has well obſerved, "Il n'y a guere d'ecrivain dont le verbiage ſoit plus grand que celui de Seneque: Cicero mettroit dans une periode de ſix lignes ce que Seneque dit dans ſix periodes qui tiennent huit ou neuf lignes." *Lettres*, t. ii. p. 150.

[*i*] The two concluding ſtanzas of this ode are omitted.

[*k*]—*my parent's*] That is of his mother's, under whoſe diſcipline he was bred; for he was *born* (Dr. Sprat tells us) *after his father's death.*

Whoſe government ne'er ſtood me in a tear;
All weeping was reſerv'd to ſpend it here.
He pluck'd from youth the follies and the crimes
And built up men againſt the future times;
For deeds of age are in their cauſes then,
And though he taught but boys, he made the men.
Hence 'twas, a maſter, in thoſe ancient days
When men ſought knowledge firſt, and by it praiſe,
Was a thing full of reverence, profit, fame;
Father itſelf was but a ſecond name.
And if a Muſe hereafter ſmile on me,
And ſay, "Be thou a poet," men ſhall ſee
That none could a more grateful ſcholar have;
For what I ow'd his life, I'll pay his grave [*l*].

IV.

On the Death of Mr. WILLIAM HERVEY [*m*].

"Immodicis brevis eſt ætas, & rara ſenectus."
MART. L. VI. Ep. xxix.

1.

IT was a diſmal, and a fearful night,
Scarce could the morn drive on th'unwilling light,

[*l*] The reſt of this poem (one of thoſe which were written, as he ſays, *when he was very young*) is ſuppreſſed.

[*m*] *Mr. William Hervey.*] The author's beloved

When ſleep, death's image, left my troubled breaſt,
By ſomething, liker death, poſſeſt.
My eyes with tears did uncommanded flow,
And on my ſoul hung the dull weight
Of ſome intolerable fate.
What bell was that? Ah me! too much I know.

2.

My ſweet companion, and my gentle peer,
Why haſt thou left me thus unkindly here,
Thy end for ever, and my life to moan;
O thou haſt left me all alone!
Thy ſoul and body, when death's agony
Beſieg'd, around, thy noble heart,
Did not with more reluctance part,
Than I, my deareſt friend, do part from thee.

3.

My deareſt friend, would I had dy'd for thee [*n*]!
Life and this world henceforth will tedious be.

friend.—This poem came from the heart, and is therefore more natural and pleaſing than moſt others in the collection. Unluckily, it occaſioned the poet's introduction to Lord St. Albans [ſee Life, p. 8]; that is, it ruined his fortune.

[*n*]—*would I had dy'd for thee!*] From 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

Nor ſhall I know hereafter what to do,
If once my griefs prove tedious too.
Silent and ſad I walk about all day,
As ſullen ghoſts ſtalk ſpeechleſs by,
Where their hid treaſures lye:
Alas, my treaſure's gone; why do I ſtay?

4.

He was my friend, the trueſt friend on earth;
A ſtrong and mighty influence join'd our birth [o].
Nor did we envy the moſt ſounding name
By friendſhip giv'n of old to fame.
None but his brethren he, and ſiſters knew,
Whom the kind youth preferr'd to me:
And ev'n in that we did agree;
For much above myſelf I lov'd them, too.

5.

Say, for you ſaw us, ye immortal lights,
How oft unwearied have we ſpent the nights;
Till the Ledæan ſtars, ſo fam'd for love,
Wonder'd at us from above!

[o] —*join'd our birth.*] In this and the following ſtanza the poet has copied Perſius, Sat. v.; but with freedom and ſpirit.

We

We ſpent them not in toys, in luſts, or wine;
But ſearch of deep philoſophy,
Wit, eloquence, and poetry,
Arts which I lov'd, for they, my friend, were thine.

6.

Ye fields of Cambridge, our dear Cambridge, ſay,
Have you not ſeen us walking every day?
Was there a tree about, which did not know
The love betwixt us two?
Henceforth, ye gentle trees, for ever fade;
Or your ſad branches thicker join,
And into darkſome ſhades combine,
Dark, as the grave, wherein my friend is laid.

7.

Henceforth, no learned youths beneath you ſing,
Till all the tuneful birds to'your boughs they bring:
No tuneful birds play with their wonted chear,
And call the learned youths to hear;
No whiſtling winds through the glad branches fly;
But all with ſad ſolemnity,
Mute and unmoved be,
Mute as the grave, wherein my friend does lye.

8.

To him my Muſe made haſte with every ſtrain,
Whilſt it was new, and warm yet from the brain.
He lov'd my worthleſs rhimes, and like a friend[p],
Would find out ſomething to commend.
Hence now, my Muſe, thou canſt not me delight;
Be this my lateſt verſe
With which I now adorn his hearſe;
And this my grief, without thy help, ſhall write.

9.

Had I a wreath of bays about my brow,
I ſhould contemn that flouriſhing honour now,
Condemn it to the fire, and joy to hear
It rage and crackle there.
Inſtead of bays, crown with ſad cypreſs me;
Cypreſs, which tombs does beautify:
Not Phœbus griev'd ſo much as I,
For him, who firſt was made that mournful tree,

[p]—*like a friend*]
—— "each finding, like a friend,
"Something to blame, and ſomething to commend."
Pope, to Mr. Jervas.

10. Large

10.

Large was his ſoul [q]; as large a ſoul, as e'er
Submitted to inform a body here.
High as the place 'twas ſhortly in heav'n to have,
But low, and humble as his grave:
So high, that all the virtues there did come
As to their chiefeſt ſeat
Conſpicuous, and great;
So low, that for me too it made a room.

11.

He ſcorn'd this buſy world below, and all
That we, miſtaken mortals, pleaſure call;
Was fill'd with innocent gallantry and truth,
Triumphant o'er the ſins of youth.
He, like the ſtars, to which he now is gone,
That ſhine with beams like flame,
Yet burn not with the ſame,
Had all the light of youth, of the fire none.

12.

Knowledge he only ſought, and ſo ſoon caught,
As if for him knowledge had rather ſought.

[q] Mr. Gray ſeems to have had his eye on this line when he wrote that verſe, in his *Epitaph*—
"*Large* was his bounty, and his *ſoul* ſincere."

Nor did more learning ever crowded lie
In ſuch a ſhort mortality.
Whene'er the ſkilful youth diſcours'd or writ,
Still did the notions throng
About his eloquent tongue,
Nor could his ink flow faſter than his wit.

13.

So ſtrong a wit did nature to him frame,
As all things, but his judgement, overcame;
His judgement like the heav'nly moon did ſhow,
Temp'ring that mighty ſea below.
Oh, had he liv'd in learning's world, what bound
Would have been able to controul
His over-powering ſoul?
We've loſt in him arts, that not yet are found[r].

14.

His mirth was the pure ſpirits of various wit,
Yet never did his God or friends forget.
And, when deep talk and wiſdom came in view,
Retir'd, and gave to them their due:

[r] — *arts that not yet are found.*]
"And worlds applaud, that muſt not yet be found."
Pope, Eſſ. on Crit. ver. 194.

For

For the rich help of books he always took,
Though his own ſearching mind before
Was ſo with notions written o'er,
As if wiſe nature had made that her book.

15.

So many virtues join'd in him, as we
Can ſcarce pick here and there in hiſtory.
More than old writers' practice e'er could reach
As much as they could ever teach:
Theſe did religion, queen of virtue, ſway
And all their ſacred motions ſteer,
Juſt like the firſt and higheſt ſphere,
Which wheels about, and turns all heav'n one way.

16.

With as much zeal, devotion, piety,
He always liv'd, as other ſaints do die.
Still with his ſoul ſevere account he kept,
Weeping all debts out, ere he ſlept.
Then down in peace and innocence he lay,
Like the ſun's laborious light,
Which ſtill in water ſets at night,
Unſullied with his journey of the day.

17. Won-

17.

Wondrous young man, why wert thou made ſo good,
To be ſnatcht hence, ere better underſtood?
Snatcht, before half of thee enough was ſeen!
Thou, ripe; and yet thy life, but green!
Nor could thy friends take their laſt ſad farewel;
But danger and infectious death
Maliciouſly ſeiz'd on that breath,
Where life, ſpirit, pleaſure, always us'd to dwell.

18.

But happy thou, ta'en from this frantic age,
Where ignorance and hypocriſy does rage!
A fitter time for heav'n no ſoul e'er choſe,
The place now only free from thoſe.
There 'mong the bleſt thou doſt for ever ſhine,
And whereſoe'er thou caſts thy view
Upon that white and radiant crew,
See'ſt not a ſoul cloath'd with more light than thine.

19.

And, if the glorious ſaints ceaſe not to know
Their wretched friends, who fight with life below;
Thy flame to me does ſtill the ſame abide,
Only more pure and rarified.

There,

There, whilſt immortal hymns thou doſt rehearſe,
Thou doſt with holy pity ſee
Our dull and earthly poeſy,
Where grief and miſery can be join'd with verſe[s].

V.

TO THE LORD FALKLAND,

For his ſafe Return from the *Northern Expedition* againſt the Scots [t].

GREAT is thy charge, O North; be wiſe and juſt:
England commits her Falkland to thy truſt;

[s] *Where grief and miſery can be join'd with verſe.*] Rightly made the diſtinction of *earthly poeſy*; for the *heavenly* (if we ſuppoſe poetry to have any place there) can only be employed on themes of *joy and happineſs*.—But the poet had a further meaning in this fine line, to inſinuate the prepoſterous levity and vanity of *earthly poets*, who can afford to be *witty* even on their own *miſeries*. This cenſure, falling firſt upon himſelf, has the more grace.

[t] *againſt the Scots.*] In 1639. Conſequently the poet was then in his 21ſt year. But the chief reaſon for giving theſe verſes to the Lord Falkland a place in the preſent collection, is, for the ſake of perpetuating the me-

Return

Return him ſafe. Learning would rather chooſe
Her Bodley, or her Vatican, to loſe.
All things, that are but writ or printed there,
In his unbounded breaſt engraven are.
There all the ſciences together meet,
And every art does all her kindred greet,
Yet juſtle not, nor quarrel; but as well
Agree, as in ſome common principle.
So, in an army govern'd right, we ſee
(Though out of ſeveral countries rais'd it be)
That all their order and their place maintain,
The Engliſh, Dutch, the Frenchmen, and the Dane.
So thouſand diverſe ſpecies fill the air,
Yet neither croud nor mix confus'dly there;
Beaſts, houſes, trees, and men together lye,
Yet enter undiſturb'd into the eye.

mory of the author's *entire friendſhip* with that virtuous and accompliſhed nobleman—*a friendſhip contracted*, as Dr. Sprat tells us, *by the agreement of their learning and manners*.—It is remarkable, that we find no compliment addreſſed by Mr. Cowley to the duke of Buckingham, or the earl of St. Albans. He ſuppoſed, without doubt, that he had done honour enough to thoſe lords (ſome will think, too much) in permitting them to be his patrons:

" Enough for half the greateſt of thoſe days
" To 'ſcape his cenſure, not expect his praiſe."

Pope.

And

And this great prince of knowledge is by fate
Thruſt into th' noiſe and buſineſs of a ſtate.
All virtues, and ſome cuſtoms [*u*], of the court,
Other mens labour, are at leaſt his ſport.
Whilſt we, who can no action undertake,
Whom idleneſs itſelf might learned make,
Who hear of nothing, and as yet ſcarce know
Whether the Scots in England be or no,
Pace dully on, oft tire, and often ſtay,
Yet ſee his nimble Pegaſus fly away.
'Tis nature's fault, who did thus partial grow,
And her eſtate of wit on one beſtow:
Whilſt we, like younger brothers, get at beſt
But a ſmall ſtock, and muſt work out the reſt.
How could he anſwer't, ſhould the ſtate think fit
To queſtion a monopoly of wit [*w*]?

[*u*] —*ſome* cuſtoms] The expreſſion is remarkable, and implies that not *all* the cuſtoms of Charles the Firſt's court were ſuch as would be approved by a man of virtue. If any are curious to know what thoſe cuſtoms were, they may have their curioſity in part gratified, by turning to two remarkable letters of Lady Leiceſter and Lord Robert Spencer, in the collection of the Sidney papers, vol. ii. p. 472, and p. 668.

[*w*] — *queſtion a monopoly of wit?*] As it had done many *other* monopolies. The alluſion is not ſo far fetched as it ſeems.

Such

Such is the man, whom we require the ſame
We lent the North; untoucht, as is his fame.
He is too good for war, and ought to be
As far from danger, as from fear he's free [x].
Thoſe men alone (and thoſe are uſeful, too)
Whoſe valour is the only art they know,
Were for ſad war and bloody battles born;
Let them the ſtate defend, and he adorn.

VI.

On the Death of Sir ANTHONY VANDIKE, the famous Painter.

VANDIKE is dead; but what bold Muſe ſhall dare
(Tho' poets in that word [y] with painters ſhare)

[x] — *as from fear he's free.*] Yet it was, in part, to vindicate himſelf from the *imputation* of this fear, that he always put himſelf in the way of *danger*, and in the end, threw away his valuable life at the battle of Newbury.

[y]—*in that word*] Namely, *dare*; alluding to Horace,

" — pictoribus atque poetis
" *Quidlibet audendi* ſemper fuit æqua poteſtas."
A. P. ver. 11.

T' ex-

T'expreſs her ſadneſs? Poeſy muſt become
An art like painting here, an art, that's dumb.
Let's all our ſolemn grief in ſilence keep,
Like ſome ſad picture, which he made to weep,
Or thoſe who ſaw't; for none his works could view
Unmov'd with the ſame paſſions which he drew.
His pieces ſo with their live objects ſtrive,
That both, or pictures ſeem, or both alive.
Nature herſelf, amaz'd, does doubting ſtand,
Which is her own, and which the painter's hand;
And does attempt the like with leſs ſucceſs,
When her own work in twins ſhe would expreſs.
His all-reſembling pencil did out-paſs
The mimic imagery of looking-glaſs.
Nor was his life leſs perfect, than his art:
Nor was his hand leſs erring than his heart [z].
There was no falſe or fading colour there;
The figures ſweet and well-proportion'd were.
Moſt other men, ſet next to him in view,
Appear'd more ſhadows than the men he drew.
Thus ſtill he liv'd, till heaven did for him call,
Where reverend Luke ſalutes him firſt of all:

[z] — *than his heart.*] A noble eulogy of this extraordinary man! and, if report ſays true, a very juſt one.

Where

Where he beholds new ſights, divinely fair;
And could almoſt wiſh for his pencil there;
Did he not gladly ſee how all things ſhine.
Wondrouſly painted in the mind divine [*a*],
Whilſt he, for ever raviſh'd with the ſhow,
Scorns his own art, which we admire below.

Only his beauteous lady [*b*] ſtill he loves;
(The love of heavenly objects heaven improves)
He ſees bright angels in pure beams appear
And thinks on her he left ſo like them here,
And you, fair widow, who ſtay here alive,
Since he ſo much rejoices, ceaſe to grieve.
Your joys and griefs were wont the ſame to be;
Begin not now, bleſt pair, to diſagree.
No wonder, death mov'd not his generous mind:
You, and a new-born you, he left behind.
Even fate expreſs'd his love to his dear wife,
And let him end your picture with his life.

[*a*] —*in the mind divine,*] A platonic idea, which Malbranche and our Norris have rendered ſo famous.

[*b*] — *his beauteous lady*] A lady, of diſtinguiſhed *quality*, as well as beauty, daughter to the Lord Ruthen, Earl of Gowry.

VII.

To Sir WILLIAM DAVENANT:

Upon his Two Firſt Books of GONDIBERT, finiſhed before his Voyage to America.

METHINKS, heroic poeſy, till now,
Like ſome fantaſtic fairy-land, did ſhow;
Gods, devils, nymphs, witches, and gyants race,
And all, but man, in man's chief work had place.
Thou, like ſome worthy knight, with ſacred arms
Doſt drive the monſters thence, and end the charms;
Inſtead of theſe, doſt men and manners plant,
The things, which that rich ſoil did chiefly want.
Yet even thy mortals do their gods excell,
Taught by thy Muſe to fight and love ſo well.
By fatal hands whilſt preſent empires fall,
Thine from the grave paſt monarchies recall.
So much more thanks from human kind does merit
The poet's fury, than the zealot's ſpirit.
And from the grave thou mak'ſt this empire riſe,
Not, like ſome dreadful ghoſt, t'affright our eyes,
But with more luſtre and triumphant ſtate,
Than when it crown'd at proud Verona ſate.

So will our God rebuild man's periſh'd frame,
And raiſe him up much better, yet the ſame [c]:
So god-like poets do paſt things rehearſe;
Not change, but heighten, nature by their verſe.
With ſhame, methinks, great Italy muſt ſee
Her conquerors rais'd to life again by thee.
Rais'd by ſuch powerful verſe, that ancient Rome
May bluſh no leſs to ſee her wit o'ercome.
Some men their fancies, like their faith, derive [d];
And think all ill but that, which Rome does give.
The marks of old and catholic would find,
To the ſame chair would truth and fiction bind.
Thou in thoſe beaten paths diſdain'ſt to tread,
And ſcorn'ſt to live by robbing of the dead.

[c] *So will—yet the ſame.*] It is pleaſant to ſee how the wits catch their ideas from each other. Mr. Pope, in a letter of compliment to a friend, who had done much honour to his *Eſſay on Man*, expreſſes himſelf in theſe words—"It is indeed the ſame ſyſtem as mine, "but illuſtrated with a ray of your own; *as they ſay* "*our natural body is the ſame ſtill, when it is glorified.*" Works, vol. ix. Letter xcvii.

[d] *Some men their fancies, like their faith, derive,*]

"Thus wit, like faith, by each man is apply'd
"To one ſmall ſect; and all are damn'd beſide."
Eſſay on Crit. ver. 396.

Since time does all things change, thou think'ſt not fit
This latter age ſhould ſee all new, but wit.
Thy fancy, like a flame, its way does make,
And leave bright tracks for following pens to take.
Sure 'twas this noble boldneſs of the Muſe
Did thy deſire to ſeek new worlds [e] infuſe;
And ne'er did heav'n ſo much a voyage bleſs,
If thou canſt plant but there, with like ſucceſs.

VIII.

On the Death of Mr. CRASHAW.

POET and Saint! to thee alone are given
The two moſt ſacred names of earth and heaven;
The hard and rareſt union, which can be,
Next that of Godhead with humanity.
Long did the Muſes baniſh'd ſlaves abide,
And built vain pyramids to mortal pride;

[e] —*new worlds*] This alludes to Sir William's project of a ſettlement at Virginia; which, however, had no better ſucceſs than the poetical project, which his friend here celebrates.

Like Moſes thou (though ſpells and charms withſtand)
Haſt brought them nobly home back to their Holy Land.

Ah wretched we, poets of earth! but thou
Wert, living, the ſame poet, which thou'rt now.
Whilſt angels ſing to thee their airs divine,
And joy in an applauſe ſo great as thine;
Equal ſociety with them to hold,
Thou need'ſt not make new ſongs, but ſay the old.
And they (kind ſpirits!) ſhall all rejoice to ſee
How little leſs than they, exalted man may be.
Still the old heathen gods in numbers dwell,
The heavenlieſt thing on earth ſtill keeps up hell.
Nor have we yet quite purg'd the Chriſtian land;
Still idols here, like calves at Bethel, ſtand.
And though Pan's death [*f*] long ſince all oracles broke,
Yet ſtill in rhyme the fiend Apollo ſpoke:

[*f*] —*Pan's death*] Alluding to the famous ſtory in Plutarch's Dialogue *concerning the ſilence of the pagan oracles*, and the uſe made of that ſtory by Euſebius and others; whence it became the general opinion of the learned, in our author's days, that, by the death of the GREAT PAN, was meant the crucifixion of our Saviour.

Nay

Nay with the worſt of heathen dotage we
(Vain men!) the monſter woman deify;
Find ſtars, and tie our fates there, in a face,
And Paradiſe in them, by whom we loſt it, place.
What different faults corrupt our Muſes thus!
Wanton as girls; as old wives, fabulous!
Thy ſpotleſs Muſe, like Mary, did contain
The boundleſs Godhead; ſhe did well diſdain
That her eternal verſe employ'd ſhould be
On a leſs ſubject than eternity;
And for a ſacred miſtreſs ſcorn'd to take,
But her, whom God himſelf ſcorn'd not his ſpouſe to make.
It (in a kind) her miracle did do;
A fruitful mother was, and virgin too.
How well (bleſt ſwan) did fate contrive thy death [g];
And made thee render up thy tuneful breath
In thy great miſtreſs' arms! thou moſt divine
And richeſt offering of Loretto's ſhrine!
Where, like ſome holy ſacrifice, t'expire,
A fever burns thee, and love lights the fire.
Angels (they ſay) brought the fam'd chapel there,
And bore the ſacred load in triumph through the air.

[g] Mr. Craſhaw died of a fever at Loretto, being newly choſen canon of that church. COWLEY.

'Tis ſurer much, they brought thee there; and they,
And thou, their charge, went ſinging all the way.
Pardon, my mother church, if I conſent
That angels led him, when from thee he went;
For even in error ſure no danger is,
When join'd with ſo much piety as his.
Ah, mighty God, with ſhame I ſpeak't, and grief,
Ah that our greateſt faults were in belief!
And our weak reaſon were ev'n weaker yet,
Rather than thus our wills too ſtrong for it!
His faith, perhaps, in ſome nice tenets might
Be wrong; his life, I'm ſure, was in the right [*b*].
And I myſelf a catholic will be,
So far at leaſt, great ſaint, to pray to thee.
Hail, bard triumphant [*i*]! and ſome care beſtow
On us, the poets militant below!

[*b*] Hence the famous lines of Mr. Pope, which have given ſuch ſcandal to ſome, and triumph to others, only becauſe both parties have been more in haſte to apply than underſtand them—

"For modes of faith let graceleſs zealots fight,
"His can't be wrong, whoſe life is in the right."

[*i*] *Hail, bard triumphant!*] Hence the apoſtrophe of Mr. Pope, but not ſo happily applied, as here—

"Hail, bards triumphant, born in happier days!"
Eſſay on Crit. ver. 189.

Oppos'd

Oppos'd by our old enemy, adverſe chance,
Attack'd by envy, and by ignorance,
Enchain'd by beauty, tortur'd by deſires,
Expos'd by tyrant-love to ſavage beaſts and fires [*k*].
Thou from low earth in nobler flames didſt riſe,
And, like Elijah, mount alive the ſkies.
Eliſha-like (but with a wiſh much leſs,
More fit thy greatneſs, and my littleneſs)
Lo here I beg (I whom thou once didſt prove
So humble to eſteem, ſo good to love)
Not that thy ſpirit might on me doubled be,
I aſk but half thy mighty ſpirit for me.
And, when my Muſe ſoars with ſo ſtrong a wing,
'Twill learn of things divine, and firſt of thee, to ſing.

IX.

Imitation of MARTIAL [*l*], Lib. V. Ep. xxi.

" SI tecum mihi, care Martialis,
" Securis liceat frui diebus;

[*k*] Expos'd by tyrant-love to *ſavage beaſts and fires.*] As the primitive Chriſtians were, by the *tyrant-hate* of their pagan perſecutors. ANON.

[*l*] Ed. Maittaire, Lond. 1716.

" Si diſponere tempus otioſum,
" Et veræ pariter vacare vitæ :
" Nec nos atria, nec domos potentum,
" Nec lites tetricas, forúmque triſte
" Noſſemus, nec imagines ſuperbas :
" Sed geſtatio, fabulæ, libelli,
" Campus, porticus, umbra, virgo, thermæ ;
" Hæc eſſent loca ſemper, hi labores.
" Nunc vivit ſibi neuter, heu, bonóſque
" Soles effugere, atque abire ſentit ;
" Qui nobis pereunt, & imputantur.
" Quiſquam vivere cùm ſciat, moratur ?"

IF, deareſt friend, it my good fate might be
T' enjoy at once a quiet life and thee ;
If we for happineſs could leiſure find [*m*],
And wandering time into a method bind ;
We ſhould not ſure the great man's favour need,
Nor on long hopes, the court's thin diet, feed.

[*m*] *If we for happineſs could leiſure find*] An exquiſite line! of which Mr. Gray felt, and has expreſſed, all the pathos, when, in his Hymn to Adverſity, he ſaid—

" Scar'd at thy frown terrific, fly
" Self-pleaſing Folly's idle brood,
" Wild Laughter, Noiſe, and thoughtleſs Joy,
" *And leave us leiſure to be good.*" ANON.

We

We ſhould not patience find, daily to hear
The calumnies, and flatteries, ſpoken there.
We ſhould not a lord's table humbly uſe,
Or talk, in ladies chambers, love and news;
But books and wiſe diſcourſe, gardens and fields,
And all the joys that unmix'd nature yields.
Thick ſummer ſhades, where winter ſtill does lye;
Bright winter fires, that ſummer's part ſupply.
Sleep, not controll'd by cares, confin'd to night;
Or bound in any rule, but appetite.
Free, but not ſavage or ungracious mirth;
Rich wines, to give it quick and eaſy birth.
A few companions, which ourſelves ſhould chuſe,
A gentle miſtreſs, and a gentler Muſe.
Such, deareſt friend, ſuch, without doubt, ſhould be
Our place, our buſineſs, and our company.
Now to himſelf, alas, does neither live,
But ſees good ſuns, of which we are to give
A ſtrict account, ſet and march thick away:
Knows a man how to live, and does he ſtay?

X.

ANACREONTICS [n]:

OR,

Some Copies of Verſes tranſlated Paraphraſtically out of ANACREON.

I.

LOVE.

I'LL ſing of heroes, and of kings;
In mighty numbers, mighty things.
Begin, my Muſe; but lo, the ſtrings
To my great ſong rebellious prove;
The ſtrings will ſound of nought, but love.
I broke them all, and put on new;
'Tis this, or nothing ſure, will do.
Theſe ſure (ſaid I) will me obey;
Theſe ſure heroic notes will play.

[n] Theſe *Anacreontics* ſhew, that the author wanted neither eaſe of expreſſion nor the grace of numbers, when he followed the bent of his own taſte and genius.

Straight

Straight I began with thundering Jove,
And all th' immortal pow'rs, but love.
Love ſmil'd; and from my enfeebled lyre
Came gentle airs, ſuch as inſpire
Melting love, and ſoft deſire.
Farewel, then, heroes, farewel kings,
And mighty numbers, mighty things;
Love tunes my heart juſt to my ſtrings.

II.

DRINKING.

THE thirſty earth ſoaks up the rain,
And drinks, and gapes for drink again.
The plants ſuck in the earth, and are,
With conſtant drinking, freſh and fair.
The ſea itſelf, which, one would think,
Should have but little need of drink,
Drinks ten thouſand rivers up,
So fill'd, that they o'erflow the cup.
The buſy ſun (and one would gueſs,
By's drunken fiery face, no leſs)
Drinks up the ſea; and when he'as done,
The moon and ſtars drink up the ſun.
They drink and dance by their own light,
They drink and revel all the night.

Nothing

Nothing in nature's ſober found,
But an eternal health goes round.
Fill up the bowl then, fill it high,
Fill all the glaſſes there: for why
Should every creature drink, but I,
Why, man of morals, tell me why?

III.

BEAUTY.

LIBERAL nature did diſpenſe
To all things arms for their defence;
And ſome ſhe arms with ſinewy force,
And ſome, with ſwiftneſs in the courſe;
Some, with hard hoofs, or forked claws,
And ſome, with horns, or tuſked jaws;
And ſome with ſcales, and ſome with wings,
And ſome with teeth, and ſome with ſtings.
Wiſdom to man ſhe did afford,
Wiſdom for ſhield, and wit for ſword.
What to beauteous woman-kind,
What arms, what armour, has ſhe aſſign'd?
Beauty is both; for with the fair
What arms, what armour, can compare?
What ſteel, what gold, or diamond,
More impaſſible is found?

And

And yet what flame, what lightning, e'er
So great an active force did bear?
They are all weapon; and they dart,
Like porcupines, from every part.
Who can, alas, their ſtrength expreſs,
Arm'd, when they themſelves undreſs,
Cap-a-pee with nakedneſs?

IV.

THE DUEL.

YES, I will love then, I will love:
I will not now love's rebel prove,
Though I was once his enemy;
Though, ill-advis'd and ſtubborn, I
Did to the combat him defy.
An helmet, ſpear, and mighty ſhield,
Like ſome new Ajax, I did wield.
Love in one hand his bow did take,
In th' other hand a dart did ſhake.
But yet in vain the dart did throw,
In vain he often drew the bow.
So well my armour did reſiſt,
So oft by flight the blow I miſs'd.
But, when I thought all danger paſt,
His quiver emptied quite at laſt,

Inſtead

Inſtead of arrow, or of dart,
He ſhot himſelf into my heart.
The living and the killing arrow
Ran through the ſkin, the fleſh, the blood,
And broke the bones, and ſcorch'd the marrow;
No trench or work of life withſtood.
In vain I now the walls maintain,
I ſet out guards and ſcouts in vain,
Since th' enemy does within remain.
In vain a breaſt-plate now I wear,
Since in my breaſt the foe I bear.
In vain my feet their ſwiftneſs try;
For from the body can they fly?

V.

AGE.

OFT am I by the women told,
Poor Anacreon, thou grow'ſt old:
Look, how thy hairs are falling all;
Poor Anacreon, how they fall!
Whether I grow old or no,
By th' effects I do not know.
This I know, without being told,
'Tis time to live, if I grow old;

'Tis

'Tis time ſhort pleaſures now to take,
Of little life the beſt to make,
And manage wiſely the laſt ſtake.

VI.

THE ACCOUNT.

WHEN all the ſtars are by thee told
(The endleſs ſums of heavenly gold);
Or, when the hairs are reckon'd all;
From ſickly autumn's head that fall,
Or, when the drops that make the ſea,
Whilſt all her ſands thy counters be;
Thou then, and thou alone, may'ſt prove
Th' arithmetician of my love.
An hundred loves at Athens ſcore,
At Corinth write an hundred more:
Fair Corinth does ſuch beauties bear,
So few is an eſcaping there [o].
Write then at Chios ſeventy-three;
Write then at Leſbos (let me ſee)
Write me at Leſbos ninety down,
Full ninety loves, and half a one.

[o] — *an eſcaping there.*] A ſtroke of moral ſatire, ſlid in, on that city, ſo infamous for its brothelry. The poet is ſage, even in theſe mad Anacreontics.

And

And next to theſe let me preſent
The fair Ionian regiment.
And next the Carian company,
Five hundred both effectively [*p*].
Three hundred more at Rhodes and Crete;
Three hundred 'tis, I'm ſure, complete;
For arms at Crete each face does bear,
And every eye's an archer there.
Go on; this ſtop why doſt thou make?
Thou think'ſt, perhaps, that I miſtake.
Seems this to thee too great a ſum?
Why, many thouſands are to come;
The mighty Xerxes could not boaſt
Such different nations in his hoſt.
On; for my love, if thou be'ſt weary,
Muſt find ſome better ſecretary.
I have not yet my Perſian told,
Nor yet my Syrian loves enroll'd,
Nor Indian, nor Arabian;
Nor Cyprian loves, nor African;
Nor Scythian, nor Italian flames;
There's a whole map behind of names:
Of gentle loves i'th' temperate zone,
And cold ones in the frigid zone;

[*p*] — *effectively*.] The term in uſe with military men (and therefore humourouſly affected here) for *completely*.

Cold

Cold frozen loves, with which I pine,
And parched loves, beneath the line:

VII.

GOLD.

A MIGHTY pain to love it is,
And 'tis a pain that pain to miſs.
But of all pains the greateſt pain
It is to love, but love in vain.
Virtue now, nor noble blood,
Nor wit by love is underſtood,
Gold alone does paſſion move,
Gold monopolizes love!
A curſe on her, and on the man
Who this traffic firſt began!
A curſe on him who found the ore!
A curſe on him who digg'd the ſtore!
A curſe on him who did refine it!
A curſe on him who firſt did coin it!
A curſe, all curſes elſe above,
On him, who us'd it firſt in love;
Gold begets in brethren hate,
Gold, in families debate;
Gold, does friendſhips ſeparate,
Gold, does civil wars create.

Theſe the ſmalleſt harms of it!
Gold, alas, does love beget.

VIII.

THE EPICURE.

FILL the bowl with roſy wine,
Around our temples roſes twine;
And let us chearfully awhile,
Like the wine and roſes, ſmile.
Crown'd with roſes, we contemn
Gyges' wealthy diadem.
To-day is our's; what do we fear?
To-day is our's; we have it here.
Let's treat it kindly, that it may
Wiſh, at leaſt, with us to ſtay.
Let's baniſh buſineſs, baniſh ſorrow;
To the gods, belongs to-morrow.

IX.

ANOTHER.

UNDERNEATH this myrtle ſhade,
On flowery beds ſupinely laid,
With odorous oils my head o'er-flowing,
And around it roſes growing,

What

What ſhould I do but drink away
The heat and troubles of the day?
In this more than kingly ſtate,
Love himſelf ſhall on me wait.
Fill to me, love, nay, fill it up;
And mingled caſt into the cup,
Wit, and mirth, and noble fires,
Vigorous health, and gay deſires.
The wheel of life no leſs will ſtay
In a ſmooth, than rugged way.
Since it equally does flee,
Let the motion pleaſant be.
Why do we precious ointments ſhower,
Nobler wines why do we pour,
Beauteous flowers why do we ſpread,
Upon the monuments of the dead?
Nothing they but duſt can ſhow,
Or bones, that haſten to be ſo.
Crown me with roſes whilſt I live,
Now your wines and ointments give.
After death I nothing crave,
Let me alive my pleaſures have;
All are Stoics in the grave.

X.

THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY inſect, what can be,
In happineſs, compar'd to thee?
Fed with nouriſhment divine,
The dewy morning's gentle wine!
Nature waits upon thee ſtill,
And thy verdant cup does fill,
'Tis fill'd, wherever thou doſt tread,
Nature's ſelf's thy Ganymed.
Thou doſt drink, and dance, and ſing;
Happier, than the happieſt king!
All the fields, which thou doſt ſee,
All the plants, belong to thee,
All that ſummer hours produce,
Fertile made with early juice.
Man for thee does ſow and plow:
Farmer he, and landlord thou!
Thou doſt innocently joy,
Nor does thy luxury deſtroy;
The ſhepherd gladly heareth thee,
More harmonious than he.
Thee, country hinds with gladneſs hear,
Prophet of the ripen'd year!

Thee,

Thee, Phœbus loves, and does inſpire;
Phœbus is himſelf thy fire.
To thee, of all things upon earth,
Life is no longer than thy mirth.
Happy inſect, happy thou
Doſt neither age nor winter know.
But, when thou'ſt drunk, and danc 'd, and ſu
Thy fill, the flowery leaves among,
(Voluptuous, and wiſe, with all,
Epicurean animal!)
Sated with thy ſummer feaſt,
Thou retir'ſt to endleſs reſt.

XI.

THE SWALLOW.

FOOLISH prater, what doſt thou
So early at my window do,
With thy tuneleſs ſerenade?
Well 't had been, had Tereus made
Thee, as dumb, as Philomel;
There his knife had done but well.
In thy undiſcover'd neſt
Thou doſt all the winter reſt,
And dreameſt o'er thy ſummer joys,
Free from the ſtormy ſeaſon's noiſe;

Free from th' ill thou'ſt done to me:
Who diſturbs, or ſeeks out thee?
Hadſt thou all the charming notes
Of the wood's poetic throats,
All thy art could never pay
What thou'ſt ta'en from me away:
Cruel bird, thou'ſt ta'en away
A dream out of my arms to-day,
A dream, that ne'er muſt equal'd be
By all that waking eyes may ſee,
Thou, this damage to repair,
Nothing half ſo ſweet or fair,
Nothing half ſo good can'ſt bring,
Though men ſay, *Thou bring'ſt the ſpring.*

****

XII.

ELEGY UPON ANACREON,

who was choaked by a GRAPE-STONE.

Spoken by the God of Love.

HOW ſhall I lament thine end,
My beſt ſervant, and my friend?
Nay, and, if from a deity
So much deified as I,

It ſound not too profane and odd,
Oh my maſter, and my god!
For 'tis true, moſt mighty poet,
(Though I like not, men ſhould know it)
I am in naked nature leſs,
Leſs by much, than in thy dreſs.
All thy verſe is ſofter far
Than the downy feathers are
Of my wings, or of my arrows,
Of my mother's doves, or ſparrows.
Sweet, as lovers freſheſt kiſſes;
Or, their riper following bliſſes;
Graceful, cleanly, ſmooth, and round,
All with Venus' girdle bound;
And thy life was all the while
Kind and gentle, as thy ſtyle.
The ſmooth-pac'd hours of ev'ry day
Glided numerouſly away.
Like thy verſe, each hour did paſs;
Sweet and ſhort, like that it was.
Some do but their youth allow me,
Juſt what they, by nature owe me;
The time, that's mine, and not their own,
The certain tribute of my crown.
When they grow old, they grow to be
Too buſy, or too wiſe, for me.

Thou wert wiſer, and didſt know,
None too wiſe for love can grow;
Love was with thy life entwin'd
Cloſe, as heat with fire is join'd,
A powerful brand preſcrib'd the date
Of thine, like Meleager's fate.
Th' antiperiſtaſis [q] of age
More enflam'd thy amorous rage;
Thy ſilver hairs yielded me more,
Than even golden curls, before.
Had I the power of creation,
As I have of generation,
Where I the matter muſt obey,
And cannot work plate out of clay;
My creatures ſhould be all like thee,
'Tis thou ſhould their idea be.

[q] *Antiperiſtaſis*] This hard word only means, *compreſſion*. The word is uſed by naturaliſts to expreſs the power, which one quality has, *by preſſing on all ſides*, to augment its contrary: as here the *cold*, with which old age is environed, increaſes heat. He expreſſes this quaint idea more plainly in two verſes of THE MISTRESS (left out in this collection), where he ſays—

"Flames their moſt vigorous heat do hold,
And pureſt light, if *compaſs'd round with cold*."

The Requeſt, St. 3.

They,

They, like thee, ſhould throughly hate
Buſineſs, honour, title, ſtate.
Other wealth they ſhould not know,
But what my living mines beſtow;
The pomp of kings they ſhould confeſs
At their crownings to be leſs
Than a lover's humbleſt guiſe,
When at his miſtreſs' feet he lies.
Rumour they no more ſhould mind
Than men ſafe-landed do, the wind;
Wiſdom itſelf they ſhould not hear,
When it preſumes to be ſevere.
Beauty alone they ſhould admire;
Nor look at fortune's vain attire,
Nor aſk what parents it can ſhew;
With dead, or old, t' has nought to do,
They ſhould not love yet all, or any,
But very much, and very many.
All their life ſhould gilded be
With mirth, and wit, and gaiety,
Well remembering, and applying
The neceſſity of dying.
Their chearful heads ſhould always wear
All that crowns the flowery year.
They ſhould always laugh, and ſing,
And dance, and ſtrike th' harmonious ſtring.

Verſe ſhould from their tongue ſo flow,
As if it in the mouth did grow,
As ſwiftly anſwering their command,
As tunes obey the artful hand.
And, whilſt I do thus diſcover
Th' ingredients of a happy lover,
'Tis, my Anacreon, for thy ſake
I of the grape no mention make.
Till my Anacreon by thee fell,
Curſed plant, I lov'd thee well.
And 'twas oft my wanton uſe,
To dip my arrows in thy juice.
Curſed plant, 'tis true, I ſee,
The old report that goes of thee,
That with giants blood the earth
Stain'd and poiſon'd gave thee birth,
And now thou wreak'ſt thy ancient ſpight
On men, in whom the gods delight,
Thy patron Bacchus, 'tis no wonder,
Was brought forth in flames and thunder;
In rage, in quarrels, and in fights,
Worſe than his tigers, he delights:
In all our heaven I think there be [r]
No ſuch ill-natur'd god as he.

[r]— *I think there be*] "I think, Crab, my dog *be* the ſoureſt-natured dog that lives." [*Shakeſp. Two Gent.*

Thou pretendeſt, traiterous wine,
To be the Muſes friend and mine.
With love and wit thou doſt begin,
Falſe fires, alas, to draw us in,
Which, if our courſe we by them keep,
Miſguide to madneſs, or to ſleep.
Sleep were well; thou'ſt learnt a way
To death itſelf now to betray.
It grieves me, when I ſee what fate
Does on the beſt of mankind wait.
Poets, or lovers, let them be,
'Tis neither love nor poeſy
Can arm againſt death's ſmalleſt dart
The poet's head, or lover's heart.
But, when their life, in its decline,
Touches th' inevitable line,
All the world's mortal to 'em then,
And wine is aconite to men.

of Verona, A. 11. *S.* 3.] *Be*, for *am* or *is*, was originally the miſtake of one *mode* for another. It, afterwards, grew into credit; and ſeemed to take an air of conſiſtency and regularity, when ſomebody had bethought himſelf to uſe, *be'ſt*, in the Second Perſon, for *art*. Hence, what grammarians call, the *double form* in the Indicative Preſent of the Auxiliary, *to be*. It is, now, deſervedly exploded.

Nay,

Nay, in death's hand, the grape-ſtone proves
As ſtrong, as thunder is in Jove's.

XI.

THE CHRONICLE.

A BALLAD[s].

1.

MARGARITA firſt poſſeſs'd,
If I remember well, my breaſt,
Margarita, firſt of all;
But, when a while the wanton maid
With my reſtleſs heart had play'd,
Martha took the flying ball.

2.

Martha ſoon did it reſign
To the beauteous Catharine.

[s] This agreeable Ballad has had juſtice done to it. Nothing is more famous, even in our days, than Cowley's *miſtreſſes*.

Beauteous

Beauteous Catharine gave place
(Though loth and angry ſhe to part
With the poſſeſſion of my heart)
To Eliſa's conquering face.

3.

Eliſa till this hour might reign,
Had ſhe not evil counſels ta'en:
Fundamental laws ſhe broke,
And ſtill new favourites ſhe choſe,
Till up in arms my paſſions roſe,
And caſt away her yoke.

4.

Mary then and gentle Anne
Both to reign at once began;
Alternately they ſway'd:
And ſometimes Mary was the fair,
And ſometimes Anne the crown did wear,
And ſometimes both I' obey'd.

5.

Another Mary then aroſe,
And did rigorous laws impoſe:
A mighty tyrant, ſhe!
Long, alas, ſhould I have been
Under that iron-ſcepter'd queen,
Had not Rebecca ſet me free.

6. When

6.

When fair Rebecca ſet me free,
'Twas then a golden time with me;
But ſoon thoſe pleaſures fled;
For the gracious princeſs dy'd
In her youth and beauty's pride,
And Judith reigned in her ſtead.

7.

One month, three days, and half an hour,
Judith held the ſovereign power;
Wondrous beautiful her face;
But ſo weak and ſmall her wit,
That ſhe to govern was unfit,
And ſo Suſanna took her place.

8.

But, when Iſabella came,
Arm'd with a reſiſtleſs flame,
And th' artillery of her eye;
Whilſt ſhe proudly march'd about
Greater conqueſts to find out,
She beat out Suſan by the bye.

9.

But in her place I then obey'd
Black-ey'd Beſs, her viceroy-maid,

To

To whom enſu'd a vacancy.
Thouſand worſe paſſions then poſſeſs'd
The interregnum of my breaſt:
Bleſs me from ſuch an anarchy!

10.

Gentle Henrietta than [*t*],
And a third Mary next began;
Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria,
And then a pretty Thomaſine,
And then another Katharine,
And then a long *et cætera*.

11.

But ſhould I now to you relate,
The ſtrength and riches of their ſtate,
The powder, patches, and the pins,
The ribbands, jewels, and the rings,
The lace, the paint, and warlike things,
That make up all their magazines:

[*t*] —*than*] So ſpelt (as many other words in theſe poems are) for the ſake of the rhyme. He had learned this art, or licence rather, from Spenſer, who practiſed it very frequently. But he might have learned better things from our old poet, if this early favourite of his youth had been taken for the model of his riper age.

12. If

12.

If I ſhould tell the politic arts
To take and keep mens hearts;
The letters, embaſſies, and ſpies,
The frowns, and ſmiles, and flatteries,
The quarrels, tears, and perjuries,
Numberleſs, nameleſs myſteries!

13.

And all the little lime-twigs laid
By Machiavel, the waiting-maid;
I more voluminous ſhould grow
(Chiefly, if I like them ſhould tell
All change of weathers [u] that befell)
Than Holinſhead or Stow.

14.

But I will briefer with them be,
Since few of them were long with me.
An higher and a nobler ſtrain
My preſent empereſs does claim,
Heleonora, *firſt o'th' name*;
Whom *God grant long to reign!*

[u] — *change of weathers*] His brilliant wit, for once, is well placed.

XII. ODE.

XII.

O D E.

ACME and SEPTIMIUS:

Out of CATULLUS.

WHILST on Septimius' panting breaſt,
(Meaning nothing leſs than reſt)
Acme lean'd her loving head,
Thus the pleas'd Septimius ſaid;

My deareſt Acme, if I be
Once alive, and love not thee
With a paſſion far above
All that e'er was called love,
In a Libyan deſert may
I become ſome lion's prey;
Let him, Acme, let him tear
My breaſt, when Acme is not there.

The god of love, who ſtood to hear him,
(The god of love was always near him)

Pleas'd and tickled with the ſound,
Sneez'd aloud: and all around
The little loves, that waited by,
Bow'd, and bleſs'd the augury.
Acme, inflam'd with what he ſaid,
Rear'd her gently-bending head,
And, her purple mouth with joy
Stretching to the delicious boy,
Twice (and twice could ſcarce ſuffice)
She kiſs'd his drunken, rowling eyes.

My little life, my all (ſaid ſhe),
So may we ever ſervants be
To this beſt god, and ne'er retain
Our hated liberty again,
So may thy paſſion laſt for me,
As I a paſſion have for thee,
Greater and fiercer much than can
Be conceiv'd by thee, a man.
Into my marrow is it gone,
Fix'd and ſettled in the bone;
It reigns not only in my heart,
But runs, like life through ev'ry part.
She ſpoke; the god of love, aloud,
Sneez'd again; and all the crowd
Of little loves, that waited by,
Bow'd, and bleſs'd the augury.

This good omen thus from heaven,
Like a happy ſignal, given,
Their loves and lives (all four) embrace,
And hand in hand run all the race.
To poor Septimius (who did now
Nothing elſe but Acme grow)
Acme's boſom was alone
The whole world's imperial throne;
And to faithful Acme's mind
Septimius was all human kind.

If the gods would pleaſe to be
But adviſ'd for once by me,
I'd adviſe them, when them ſpy
Any illuſtrious piety,
To reward her, if it be ſhe;
To reward him, if it be he;
With ſuch a huſband, ſuch a wife [*w*],
With Acme's and Septimius' life.

[*w*] —*ſuch a* huſband, *ſuch a* wife] It is to be obſerved, to the honour of our author's morals, and good taſte, that, by this little deviation from his original, he has converted a looſe love-poem into a ſober epithalamium. We have all the grace, and, what is more, all the warmth of Catullus, without his indecency.

XIII.

THE PRAISE OF PINDAR [x].

AN ODE:

In Imitation of HORACE, 4 Od. ii.

I.

PINDAR is imitable by none;
The phœnix Pindar is a vaſt ſpecies alone.
Whoe'er, but Dædalus, with waxen wings could fly,
And neither ſink too low, nor ſoar too high?
What could he, who follow'd, claim,
But of vain boldneſs the unhappy fame,
And, by his fall, a ſea to name?

[x] *The praiſe of Pindar.*] This, and the three following odes are in the number of thoſe, which Mr. Cowley calls, *Pindaric:* an exquiſite ſort of poetry, to which his *ſtyle* was very ill ſuited; being, for the moſt part, careleſs, and ſometimes, affectedly vulgar.--The ideas, in this ode, are from Horace; but the ſpirit and expreſſion, are the writer's own.

Pindar's unnavigable ſong,
Like a ſwoln flood from ſome ſteep mountain, pours
along;
The ocean meets with ſuch a voice
From his enlarged mouth, as drowns the ocean's
noiſe.

2.

So Pindar does new words and figures roul
Down his impetuous dithyrambic tide,
Which in no channel deigns t'abide,
Which neither banks nor dikes controul.
Whether th' immortal gods he ſings
In a no leſs immortal ſtrain;
Or the great acts of god-deſcended kings,
Who in his numbers ſtill ſurvive and reign.
Each rich embroider'd line,
Which their triumphant brows around,
By his ſacred hand, is bound,
Does all their ſtarry diadems outſhine.

3.

Whether at Piſa's race he pleaſe
To carve in poliſh'd verſe the conquerors images:
Whether the ſwift, the ſkilful, or the ſtrong,
Be crowned in his nimble, artful, vigorous ſong:

Whether ſome brave young man's untimely fate,
In words worth dying for, he celebrate,
Such mournful, and ſuch pleaſing words,
As joy t'his mother's and his miſtreſs' grief affords:
He bids him live and grow in fame,
Among the ſtars he ſticks his name [y];
The grave can but the droſs of him devour;
So ſmall is death's, ſo great the poet's, power.

4.

Lo, how th' obſequious wind, and ſwelling air,
The Theban ſwan [z] does upwards bear
Into the walks of clouds, where he does play,
And with extended wings open his liquid way,
Whilſt, alas, my tim'rous Muſe
Unambitious tracks purſues;

[y] *Among the ſtars he ſticks his name*]
"Stellis inſerere, et concilio Jovis." Hor. 3 Od. XXV. 6. COWLEY.

[z] *The Theban ſwan*] Mr. Gray calls him, *the Theban eagle*; but the imagery of both poets is much the ſame.

—— "tho' he inherit
"Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
"That the Theban eagle bear,
"Sailing with ſupreme dominion
"Thro' the azure deep of air." Progreſs of Poetry.

Does,

Does, with weak unballaſt wings,
About the moſſy brooks and ſprings;
About the trees new-bloſſom'd heads,
About the gardens painted beds,
About the fields and flowery meads,
And all inferior beauteous things,
Like the laborious bee,
For little drops of honey flee [*a*],
And there with humble ſweets contents her induſtry.

XIV.

BRUTUS [*b*].

AN ODE.

I.

EXCELLENT Brutus, of all human race
The beſt, till nature was improv'd by grace,

[*a*]—*flee*] The proper word had been *fly*, if the rhyme would have given leave. To *flee*, is properly to *move with ſpeed out of the way of danger*; to *fly*, to *move with ſpeed on* WINGS.

[*b*] The ſubject of this ode ſeems to have been choſen by the poet, for the ſake of venting his indig-

Till men above themſelves faith raiſed more,
Than reaſon above beaſts, before.
Virtue was thy life's centre, and from thence
Did ſilently and conſtantly diſpenſe
The gentle vigorous influence
To all the wide and fair circumference:
And all the parts upon it lean'd ſo eaſily,
Obey'd the mighty force ſo willingly,

nation againſt Cromwell.—It has been generally ſuppoſed, that Mr. Cowley had no ear for harmony, and even no taſte of elegant expreſſion. And one ſhould be apt to think ſo, from his untuned verſe and rugged ſtyle: but the caſe was only this: Donne and Jonſon were the favourite poets of the time, and therefore their models, on which our poet was ambitious to form himſelf. But unhappily theſe poets *affected* harſh numbers and uncooth expreſſion; and what they affected, eaſily came to be looked upon as *beauties*. Even Milton himſelf, in his younger days, fell into this deluſion. [See his poem on *Shakeſpear*.] But the vigour of his genius, or, perhaps, his courſe of life, which led him out of the high-road of faſhion, enabled him, in good time, to break through the ſnare of—*exemplar vitiis imitabile*. The court, which had worſe things to anſwer for, kept poor Cowley eternally in it. *He forſook the converſation* (ſays Dr. Sprat, who deſigned him a compliment in the obſervation), *but never* THE LANGUAGE OF THE COURT.

That

That none could diſcord or diſorder ſee
In all their contrariety.
Each had his motion natural and free,
And the whole no more mov'd, than the whole world could be.

2.

From the ſtrict rule ſome think that thou didſt ſwerve
(Miſtaken honeſt men) in Cæſar's blood:
What mercy could the tyrant's life deſerve
From him, who kill'd himſelf, rather than ſerve?
Th' heroic exaltations of good
Are ſo far from underſtood,
We count them vice: alas, our ſight 's ſo ill,
That things, which ſwifteſt move, ſeem to ſtand ſtill.
We look not upon virtue in her height,
On her ſupreme idea, brave and bright,
In the original light;
But as her beams reflected paſs
Through our own nature, or ill cuſtom's glaſs:
And 'tis no wonder ſo,
If, with dejected eye,
In ſtanding pools we ſeek the ſky,
That ſtars, ſo high above, ſhould ſeem to us below.

3.

Can we ſtand by, and ſee
Our mother robb'd, and bound, and raviſh'd be,
Yet not to her aſſiſtance ſtir,
Pleas'd with the ſtrength and beauty of the raviſher [c]?
Or, ſhall we fear to kill him, if before
The cancel'd name of friend he bore?
Ingrateful Brutus do they call?
Ingrateful Cæſar, who could Rome enthral!
In act more barbarous and unnatural
(In th' exact balance of true virtue tried)
Than his ſucceſſor Nero's parricide!
There's none, but Brutus, could deſerve
That all men elſe ſhould wiſh to ſerve,

[c] This is well put. But *piety to the mother* muſt not extinguiſh all regard for the mother's *ſons*. Nothing contributed ſo much, as the aſſaſſination of the firſt Cæſar, to bring on all thoſe tragedies, with which the gloomy and unappeaſable jealouſy of his ſucceſſors, afterwards, filled the Roman annals. The queſtion is not, what Cæſar deſerved, but what the true intereſt of the Roman people required. For in theſe caſes, as Macbeth well obſerves,

——— "we but teach
"Bloody inſtructions, which, being taught, return
"To plague th' inventor"— Act I. S. viii.

And

And Cæſar's uſurp'd place to him ſhould proffer;
None can deſerve 't, but he, who would refuſe
the offer.

4.

Ill fate aſſum'd a body, thee t' affright,
And wrapt itſelf i'th' terrors of the night,
I'll meet thee at Philippi, ſaid the ſpright:
I'll meet thee there, ſaidſt thou,
With ſuch a voice, and ſuch a brow,
As put the trembling ghoſt to ſudden flight;
It vaniſh'd, as a taper's light
Goes out, when ſpirits appear in ſight.
One would have thought, 't had heard the morning crow,
Or ſeen her well-appointed ſtar
Come marching up the eaſtern hill afar [*d*].
Nor durſt it in Philippi's field appear,
But unſeen attack'd thee there.
Had it preſum'd in any ſhape thee to oppoſe,
Thou wouldſt have forc'd it back upon thy foes:

[*d*] —*eaſtern hill afar.*]
"Till down the eaſtern cliffs afar,
"Hyperion's march they ſpy, and glitt'ring ſhafts of
"war." Mr. Gray.

Or

Or ſlain 't, like Cæſar, though it be
A conqueror, and a monarch, mightier far than he,

5.

What joy can human things to us afford,
When we ſee periſh thus, by odd events,
Ill men, and wretched accidents,
The beſt cauſe, and beſt man that ever drew a ſword?
When we ſee
The falſe Octavius, and wild Antony,
God-like Brutus, conquer thee?
What can we ſay, but thine own tragic word,
That virtue, which had worſhip'd been by thee
As the moſt ſolid good, and greateſt deity,
By this fatal proof became
An idol only, and a name?
Hold, noble Brutus, and reſtrain
The bold voice of thy generous diſdain:
Theſe mighty gulphs are yet
Too deep for all thy judgement and thy wit.
The time's ſet forth already, which ſhall quell
Stiff reaſon, when it offers to rebell;
Which theſe great ſecrets ſhall unſeal,
And new philoſophies reveal.

A few

A few years more, ſo ſoon hadſt thou not died,
Would have confounded human virtue's pride,
And ſhew'd thee a God crucified.

XV.

To Mr. HOBBES [e].

I.

VAST bodies of philoſophy
I oft have ſeen, and read;
But all are bodies dead,
Or bodies by art faſhioned:
I never yet the living ſoul could ſee,
But in thy books, and thee.
'Tis only God can know
Whether the fair idea thou doſt ſhow
Agree intirely with his own, or no.

[e] Mr. Hobbes was, at this time, the philoſopher in faſhion: and Mr. Cowley ſpeaks the faſhionable, rather than his own ſenſe of him; as appears from the exaggerated ſtrain of his panegyric. However, he does but juſtice to the vigour of his ſenſe, and the manly elegance of his ſtyle: for the *latter* of which qualities, chiefly, his philoſophic writings are now valuable.

This

This I dare boldly tell,
'Tis ſo like truth, 'twill ſerve our turn as well [*f*].
Juſt, as in nature, thy proportions be,
As full of concord, their variety;
As firm the parts upon their centre reſt;
And all ſo ſolid are, that they at leaſt,
As much as nature, emptineſs deteſt.

2.

Long did the mighty Stagirite retain [*g*]
The univerſal intellectual reign,
Saw his own country's ſhort-liv'd leopard ſlain[*h*];
The ſtronger Roman-eagle did outfly [*i*],
Oftner renewed his age, and ſaw that die;

[*f*] *This I dare boldly tell,*
'Tis ſo like truth, 'twill ſerve our turn as well.] The writer, indeed, is a poet: but this was rather *too boldly* ſaid.

[*g*] Ariſtotle; ſo called from the town of Stagira, where he was born, ſituated near the bay of Strymon in Macedonia. COWLEY.

[*h*] Outlaſted the Grecian empire, which, in the viſions of Daniel, is repreſented, by a leopard, with four wings upon the back, and four heads, chap. vii. 6. COWLEY.

[*i*] Was received even beyond the bounds of the Roman empire, and out-lived it. COWLEY.

Meccha itſelf, in ſpight of Mahomet, poſſeſs'd[k],
And, chas'd by a wild deluge from the Eaſt,
His monarchy new planted in the Weſt.
But, as in time each great imperial race
Degenerates, and gives ſome new one place;
So did this noble empire waſte,
Sunk by degrees from glories paſt,
And in the ſchool-mens hands it periſh'd quite at laſt.
Then nought but words it grew,
And thoſe all barbarous too:
It periſh'd, and it vaniſh'd there,
The life and ſoul, breath'd out, became but empty air.

[k] For Ariſtotle's philoſophy was in great eſteem among the Arabians or Saracens; witneſs thoſe many excellent books upon him, or according to his principles, written by Averroes, Avicenna, Avempace, and divers others. *In ſpight of Mahomet*: becauſe his law, being adapted to the barbarous humour of thoſe people he had firſt to deal withal, and aiming only at greatneſs of empire by the ſword, forbids all the ſtudies of learning; which (nevertheleſs) floriſhed admirably under the Saracen monarchy, and continued ſo, till it was extinguiſhed with that empire, by the inundation of the Turks, and other nations. Meccha is the town in Arabia where Mahomet was born. COWLEY.

3.

The fields, which anſwer'd well the ancients plough,
Spent and out-worn, return no harveſt now,
In barren age wild and unglorious lie,
And boaſt of paſt fertility,
The poor relief of preſent poverty.
Food and fruit we now muſt want,
Unleſs new lands we plant.
We break up tombs with ſacrilegious hands;
Old rubbiſh we remove;
To walk in ruins, like vain ghoſts, we love.
And with fond divining wands [*l*]
We ſearch among the dead
For treaſures buried,
Whilſt ſtill the liberal earth does hold
So many virgin mines of undiſcover'd gold.

4.

The Baltic, Euxine, and the Caſpian,
And ſlender-limb'd Mediterranean [*m*],

[*l*] *Virgula divina*, or a divining wand, is a two-forked branch of an hazel-tree, which is uſed for the finding out either of veins, or hidden treaſures, of gold or ſilver; and being carried about, bends downwards (or rather is ſaid to do ſo) when it comes to the place where they lye. COWLEY.

[*m*] All the navigation of the ancients was in theſe

Seem

Seem narrow creeks to thee, and only fit
For the poor wretched fiſher-boats of wit.
Thy nobler veſſel the vaſt ocean tries,
And nothing ſees, but ſeas and ſkies,
Till unknown regions it deſcries,
Thou great Columbus of the golden lands of new philoſophies.
Thy taſk was harder much, than his;
For thy learn'd America is
Not only found out firſt by thee,
And rudely left to future induſtry;
But thy eloquence, and thy wit,
Has planted, peopled, built, and civiliz'd it.

5.

I little thought before,
(Nor, being my own ſelf ſo poor,
Could comprehend ſo vaſt a ſtore)
That all the wardrobe of rich eloquence
Could have afforded half enough,
Of bright, of new, and laſting ſtuff,
To cloathe the mighty limbs of thy gigantic ſenſe [n].

ſeas; they ſeldom ventured into the ocean; and when they did, did only *littus legere*, coaſt about near the ſhore. COWLEY.

[n] The meaning is, that his notions are ſo new, and

Thy ſolid reaſon, like the ſhield from heaven
To the Trojan hero given [*o*],
Too ſtrong to take a mark from any mortal dart,
Yet ſhines with gold and gems in every part,
And wonders on it grav'd by the learn'd hand of art;
A ſhield, that gives delight
Even to the enemies ſight,
Then, when they're ſure to loſe the combat by't [*p*].

6.

Nor can the ſnow, which now cold age does ſhed
Upon thy reverend head,
Quench or allay the noble fires within;
But all which thou haſt been,

ſo great, that I did not think it had been poſſible to have found out words to expreſs them clearly; as no ward-robe can furniſh cloaths to fit a body taller and bigger than ever any was before: for the cloaths were made according to ſome meaſure that then was. COWLEY.

[*o*] See the excellent deſcription of this ſhield, made by Vulcan, at the requeſt of Venus, for her ſon Æneas, at the end of the eighth book of the Æneid,

—"et clypei non enarrabile textum."

whereon was graven all the Roman hiſtory. COWLEY.

[*p*] —*to loſe the combat by't.*] As not a few did, who preſumed, with very unequal arms, to try the temper of that *magic* ſhield; which time and common ſenſe, however, have at length diſenchanted.

And

And all that youth can be, thou'rt yet;
So fully ſtill doſt thou
Enjoy the manhood, and the bloom of wit,
And all the natural heat, but not the fever too.
So contraries on Ætna's top [q] conſpire;
Here hoary froſts, and by them breaks out fire [r].

[q] *So contraries on Ætna's top*] By making *the froſts on Ætna's top* a compariſon only, and not enlarging directly on the contrary qualities of *cold* and *heat*, taken ſometimes in the literal ſenſe, and ſometimes in the metaphorical, the poet has kept clear, in a good degree, of that *mixt wit* (as Mr. Addiſon calls it), in which he ſo much excelled and delighted. The *fire of Hobbes' genius*, breaking out under the *ſnow of his gray hairs*, might have been ſet in ſo many different lights by our ingenious author, and have been worked up by him into ſuch a variety of amuſing contraſts, that the temperate uſe of his darling faculty, in this inſtance, deſerves our commendation.

[r] The deſcription of the neighbourhood of fire and ſnow, upon Ætna (but not the application of it) is imitated out of Claude. l. i. de Raptu Proſ.

" Sed quamvis nimio fervens exuberet æſtu,
" Scit nivibus ſervare fidem, pariterque favillis
" Dureſcit glacies, tanti ſecura vaporis,
" Arcano defenſa gelu, fumoque fideli
" Lambit contiguas innoxia flamma pruinas."

Where, methinks, is ſomewhat of that which Seneca objects to Ovid, *Neſcivit quod benè ceſſit relinquere.* When he met with a fancy that pleaſed him, he could not find

A ſecure peace the faithful neighbours keep,
Th'embolden'd ſnow next to the flame does ſleep.
And, if we weigh, like thee,
Nature, and cauſes, we ſhall ſee
That thus it needs muſt be;
To things immortal time can do no wrong;
And that which never is to die, for ever muſt be young.

in his heart to quit, or ever to have done with it. Tacitus has the like expreſſion of Mount Libanus, *Præcipuum montium Libanum, mirum dictu, tantos inter ardores opacum fidumque nivibus*; ſhady among ſuch great heats, and faithful to the ſnow; which is too poetical for the proſe even of a romance, much more of an hiſtorian. Sil. Italic. of Ætna, l. xiv.

" Summo cana jugo cohibet (mirabile dictu)
" Vicinam flammis glaciem, æternoque rigore
" Ardentes horrent ſcopuli, ſtat vertice celſi
" Collis hyems, calidaque nivem tegit atra favillâ."

See likewiſe Seneca, Epiſt. 79. COWLEY.

XVI. LIFE

XVI.

LIFE AND FAME.

OH life, thou nothing's younger brother [*s*]!
So like, that one might take one for the other [*t*]!
What's ſomebody, or nobody [*u*]?

[*s*] Becauſe nothing preceded it, as privation does all being; which perhaps is the ſenſe of the diſtinction of days in the ſtory of the creation; night ſignifying the privation, and day, the ſubſequent being, from whence the evening is placed firſt, Gen. i. 5. "And the even-"ing and the morning were the firſt day." COWLEY.

[*t*] *Oh life, thou nothing's younger brother!*
So like, that one might take one for the other!] i. e. *life is leſs than nothing, but, as being come of nothing, is very like it.* Mr. Cowley's poetry (as here) is often much diſfigured by the double affectation of *wit* and *familiarity*. He would ſay an out-of-the way thing, in a trivial manner.—But ſuch was the court-idea, in his time, of *writing, like a gentleman.*

[*u*] Τί δὲ τίς, τί δ' οὔτις; Σκιᾶς ὄναρ ἄνθρωπος. Pindar. *What is ſomebody, or what is nobody! Man is the dream of a ſhadow.* COWLEY.

In all the cobwebs of the ſchoolmen's trade [*w*],
We no ſuch nice diſtinction woven ſee,
As 'tis, to be, or, not to be.
Dream of a ſhadow [*x*]! a reflection, made
From the falſe glories of the gay reflected bow [*y*],
Is a more ſolid thing than thou.
Vain weak-built iſthmus [*z*], which doſt proudly riſe
Up betwixt two eternities [*a*];

[*w*] The diſtinctions of the ſchoolmen may be likened to cobwebs (I mean many of them, for ſome are better woven); either becauſe of the too much fineneſs of the work, which makes it ſlight, and able to catch only little creatures; or becauſe they take not the materials from nature, but ſpin it out of themſelves. COWLEY.

[*x*] *Dream of a ſhadow!*] Juſtly admired by Plutarch, as a moſt ingenious and expreſſive hyperbole. Vol. ii. p. 104. ed. Xyland. Par. 1624.

[*y*] The rainbow is in itſelf of no colour; thoſe that appear are but reflections of the ſun's light received differently—

"Mille trahit varios adverſo ſole colores;"

as is evident by artificial rainbows; and yet this ſhadow, this almoſt nothing, makes ſometimes another rainbow (but not ſo diſtinct or beautiful) by reflection. COWLEY.

[*z*] Iſthmus is a neck of land that divides a peninſula from the continent and is betwixt two ſeas, Γῆ ἀμφιθάλασσα. In which manner this narrow paſſage of life divides the paſt time from the future, and is at laſt ſwallowed up into eternity. COWLEY.

[*a*] *Iſthmus, —betwixt two eternities;*] A ſublime idea,

Yet

Yet canſt nor wave nor wind ſuſtain;
But, broken and o'erwhelm'd, the endleſs oceans
meet again.

2.

And with what rare inventions do we ſtrive,
Ourſelves then to ſurvive?
Wiſe, ſubtle arts, and ſuch as well befit
That nothing man's no wit.
Some with vaſt coſtly tombs would purchaſe it,
And, by the proofs of death, pretend to live.
Here lies the great—Falſe marble, where?
Nothing but ſmall and ſordid duſt lies there.
Some build enormous mountain-palaces,
The fools and architects to pleaſe:

which lay unnoticed in this ode, till Mr. Pope produced it into obſervation —

" Plac'd on this *iſthmus of a middle ſtate*,
" A being darkly wiſe, and rudely great."
Eſſ. on Man, ep. ii. 3.

Not but our philoſophical poet had his eye, alſo, on M. Paſcal — " qu'eſt-ce que l'homme dans la nature? " Un neant à l'égard de l'infini, un tout à l'égard du " neant, *un milieu entre rien et tout*. Il eſt infiniment " éloigné des deux extrêmes; et ſon être n'eſt moins " diſtant du neant d'où il eſt tiré, que de l'infini où il " eſt englouti." *Penſées*, c. xxii.

A laſting life in well-hewn ſtone they rear:
So he, who on th' Egyptian ſhore [*b*]
Was ſlain, ſo many hundred years before,
Lives ſtill (oh life, moſt happy and moſt dear!
Oh life, that Epicures envy to hear [*c*]!)
Lives in the drooping ruins of his amphitheatre.

3.

His [*d*] father-in-law [*e*] an higher place does claim
In the ſeraphic entity of fame [*f*].
He, ſince that toy, his death [*g*],
Does fill all mouths, and breathes in all men's breath.

[*b*] Pompey the great. COWLEY.

[*c*] An irony; that is, "Oh life, which Epicure, "laugh at and contemn!" COWLEY.

[*d*] Cæſar, whoſe daughter Julia was married to Pompey; an alliance fatal to the commonwealth; which, as Tully ſays, ought never to have been made, or never ended. COWLEY.

[*e*] *His father-in-law*] This, again, is in the familiar ſtyle. He might have ſaid, more ſuitably to the ſtyle of an ode—

"Great Cæſar's ſelf"——

[*f*] Supernatural, intellectual, unintelligible being. COWLEY.

[*g*] —*that toy, his death*] Called a *toy*, becauſe the play-thing of every declaimer, from that time to this,

'Tis

'Tis true, the two immortal ſyllables [*b*] remain,
But, o ye learned men, explain,
What eſſence, what exiſtence this,
What ſubſtance, what ſubſiſtence, what hypoſtaſis,
In ſix poor letters is?
In thoſe alone does the great Cæſar live;
'Tis all the conquer'd world could give.
We poets, madder yet than all,
With a refin'd fantaſtic vanity,
Think, we not only have, but give eternity.
Fain would I ſee that prodigal,

and, by paſſing through ſo many hands, more inſtrumental to the propagation of Cæſar's fame, than all the glories of his life.

[*b*] —*two immortal ſyllables*] This lively ridicule, on *poſthumous fame*, is well enough placed in a poem, or declamation: but we are a little ſurprized to find ſo grave a writer, as Mr. Wollaſton, diverting himſelf with it. "In reality (ſays he) the man is not known ever the more "to poſterity, becauſe his name is tranſmitted to them: "*he* doth not live, becauſe his *name* does. When it is "ſaid, J. Cæſar ſubdued Gaul, beat Pompey, changed "the Roman commonwealth," &c.—*Rel. of Nat. Sect.* v. —The ſophiſtry is apparent. Put *Cato* in the place of Cæſar; and then ſee whether that great man do not *live* in his name, *ſubſtantially*, that is, to good purpoſe, if the impreſſion, which thoſe *two immortal ſyllables* make on the mind, be of uſe in exciting poſterity, or any one man, to the love and imitation of Cato's virtue.

Who

Who his to-morrow would beſtow
For all old Homer's life, e'er ſince he died, till now.

XVII.

On the Death of Mrs. CATHARINE PHILIPS [i].

CRUEL diſeaſe! ah, could it not ſuffice
Thy old and conſtant ſpight to exerciſe
Againſt the gentleſt and the faireſt ſex,
Which ſtill thy depredations moſt do vex?
Where ſtill thy malice moſt of all
(Thy malice or thy luſt) does on the faireſt fall?
And in them moſt aſſault the faireſt place,
The throne of empreſs beauty, ev'n the face?
There was enough of that here to aſſwage
(One would have thought) either thy luſt or rage;
Was't not enough, when thou, prophane diſeaſe,
Didſt on this glorious temple ſeize;

[i] This poem is preſerved, in honour of the lady, here celebrated, who had the fortune to be equally eſteemed by the beſt poet and beſt divine of her age.

Was't

Was't not enough, like a wild zealot, there,
All the rich outward ornaments to tear,
Deface the innocent pride of beauteous images?
Was't not enough thus rudely to defile,
But thou muſt quite deſtroy, the goodly pile?
And thy unbounded ſacrilege commit
On th' inward holieſt holy [*k*] of her wit?
Cruel diſeaſe! there thou miſtook'ſt thy power:
No mine of death can that devour;
On her embalmed name it will abide
An everlaſting pyramide,
As high as heav'n the top, as earth the baſis wide.

2.

All ages paſt record, all countries now,
In various kinds, ſuch equal beauties ſhow,
That ev'n judge Paris [*l*] would not know
On whom the golden apple to beſtow;
Though goddeſſes to his ſentence did ſubmit,
Women and lovers would appeal from it:
Nor durſt he ſay, of all the female race,
This is the ſovereign face.

[*k*] —*holieſt holy*] I wiſh the poet had forborn this alluſion.

[*l*] —*judge Paris*] Familiar, again, or rather burleſque; quite out of ſeaſon.

And

And ſome (though theſe be of a kind that's rare,
That's much, ah, much leſs frequent, than the fair)
So equally renown'd for virtue are,
That it the mother of the gods might poſe,
When the beſt woman for her guide ſhe choſe [*m*].
But, if Apollo ſhould deſign
A woman laureat to make,
Without diſpute he would Orinda take,
Though Sappho and the famous Nine
Stood by, and did repine.
To be a princeſs or a queen,
Is great; but 'tis a greatneſs always ſeen;
The world did never but two women know,
Who, one by fraud, th' other by wit, did riſe
To the two tops of ſpiritual dignities [*n*],
One female pope of old, one female poet now.

[*m*] Alluding to the introduction of the ſtatue of *Cybele* into Rome: *Liv.* l. xxix. The goddeſs, indeed, had a long train of Roman matrons for her attendants. But, as the hiſtorian tells the ſtory, ſhe choſe the *beſt man* in Rome for her *hoſt*; not the *beſt woman*, for her *guide*. Whether the poet forgot himſelf, or purpoſely falſified the ſtory for the ſake of his application, I know not.

[*n*] —*ſpiritual dignities*] The Engliſh word, *ſpiritual*, as applied to dignities, means *religious* or *eccleſiaſtical*, in oppoſition to *civil* or *temporal*. But the French word *ſpirituel*, of like ſound, means, alſo, *witty* or *intellectual*. Hence the *equivoque*; with which our poet was not a lit-

3. Of

3.

Of female poets, who had names of old,
Nothing is ſhown, but only told;
And all we hear of them perhaps may be
Male-flattery only, and male-poetry.
Few minutes did their beauties lightning waſte,
The thunder of their voice did longer laſt,
But that, too, ſoon was paſt.
The certain proofs of our Orinda's wit,
In her own laſting characters are writ;
And they will long my praiſe of them ſurvive,
Though long perhaps, too, that may live.
The trade of glory manag'd by the pen,
Though great it be, and every where is found,
Does bring in but ſmall profit to us men;
'Tis by the number of the ſharers drown'd.
Orinda, on the female coaſts of fame,
Ingroſſes all the goods of a poetic name:

tle pleaſed, as we may ſee by his repetition of it, in the *Complaint*, St. ii.—

"Among the *ſpiritual* lords of peaceful fame."

—He forgot, on this and other occaſions, his own definition of true wit by negatives—

"'Tis not, when *two like words* make up *one noiſe*."

St. ii. 6.

She does no partner with her ſee;
Does all the buſineſs there alone, which we
Are forc'd to carry on by a whole company.

4.

But wit's like a luxuriant vine;
Unleſs to virtue's prop it join,
Firm and erect towards heaven bound:
Though it with beauteous leaves and pleaſant fruit be crown'd,
It lies deform'd, and rotting on the ground.
Now ſhame and bluſhes on us all,
Who our own ſex ſuperior call!
Orinda does our boaſting ſex out-do,
Not in wit only, but in virtue too.
She does above our beſt examples riſe,
In hate of vice, and ſcorn of vanities.
Never did ſpirit of the manly make,
And dipt all o'er in learning's ſacred lake,
A temper more invulnerable take.
No violent paſſion could an entrance find,
Into the tender goodneſs of her mind:
Through walls of ſtone thoſe furious bullets may
Force their impetuous way;
When her ſoft breaſt they hit, powerleſs and dead they lay.

5. The

5.

The fame of friendſhip [o], which ſo long had told
Of three or four illuſtrious names of old,
Till hoarſe and weary with the tale ſhe grew,
Rejoices now t' have got a new,
A new, and more ſurprizing ſtory,
Of fair Leucaſia's and Orinda's glory.
As when a prudent man does once perceive
That in ſome foreign country he muſt live,
The language and the manners he does ſtrive
To underſtand and practice here,
That he may come, no ſtranger there;
So well Orinda did herſelf prepare,
In this much different clime, for her remove
To the glad world of poetry and love.

[o] *The fame of friendſhip*] Mrs. Philips was as much famed for her *friendſhips*, as for her poetry. Dr. *J. Taylor* addreſſed his diſcourſe *on the nature and offices of friendſhip*, to this lady.

XVIII. HYMN.

XVIII.

HYMN.

TO LIGHT [p].

FIRST-born of Chaos, who ſo fair didſt come
From the old Negro's darkſome womb!
Which when it ſaw the lovely child,
The melancholy maſs put on kind looks, and ſmil'd.

2.

Thou tide of glory, which no reſt doſt know,
But ever ebb, and ever flow!
Thou golden ſhower of a true Jove!
Who does in thee deſcend, and heaven to earth make love!

[p] The moral ſtrokes in this hymn amply atone for the falſe wit and quaint imagery, in which it too much abounds.—It was the malady of that age, to be only taken,

"With glitt'ring thoughts ſtruck out at ev'ry line:"

Pope.

And the abundance of Mr. Cowley's wit made it but too eaſy for him to regale the vitiated taſte of his readers with this ſort of entertainment.

3. Hail,

3.

Hail, active nature's watchful life and health!
Her joy, her ornament, and wealth!
Hail to thy husband, Heat, and thee!
Thou, the world's beauteous bride! the lusty bridegroom, he!

4.

Say, from what golden quivers of the sky,
Do all thy winged arrows fly?
Swiftness and Power by birth are thine:
From thy great fire they came; thy fire, the Word Divine.

5.

'Tis, I believe, this archery to show,
That so much cost in colours thou
And skill in painting dost bestow
Upon thy ancient arms, the gawdy heavenly bow.

6.

Swift as light thoughts their empty carriere run,
Thy race is finish'd, when begun;

Let a poſt-angel ſtart with thee [q],
And thou the goal of earth ſhalt reach, as ſoon as he.

7.

Thou, in the moon's bright chariot proud and gay,
Doſt thy bright wood of ſtars ſurvey;
And all the year doſt with thee bring
Of thouſand flowery lights thine own nocturnal ſpring.

8.

Thou, Scythian-like, doſt round thy lands above
The ſun's gilt tent for ever move,
And ſtill, as thou in pomp doſt go,
The ſhining pageants of the world attend thy ſhow.

9.

Nor, amidſt all theſe triumphs, doſt thou ſcorn
The humble glow-worms to adorn,

[q] —*poſt-angel ſtart with thee*] One of the moſt glaring faults in the poetry of Mr. Cowley's age was the debaſing of great ſentiments and images by low alluſions and vulgar expreſſions. What the reader looked for, was *wit*; and he looked no farther: as if that rule of common ſenſe had been a diſcovery of yeſterday—

"*Expreſſion* is the dreſs of thought, and ſtill
"Appears more decent, as more *ſuitable*."
Pope, Eſſay on Crit. ver. 318.

And

And with thoſe living ſpangles gild
(O greatneſs without pride!) the buſhes of the field.

10.

Night, and her ugly ſubjects [r], thou doſt fright,
And Sleep, the lazy owl of night;
Aſham'd and fearful to appear
They ſkreen their horrid ſhapes with the black hemiſphere.

11.

With 'em there haſtes, and wildly takes the alarm,
Of painted dreams, a buſy ſwarm;
At the firſt opening of thine eye,
The various cluſters break, the antic atoms fly.

[r] *Night, and her ugly ſubjects*, &c.]
" Night and all her ſickly dews,
" Her ſpectres wan," &c.——
Mr. Gray, in *The progreſs of poeſy*.
This excellent writer, not unfrequently, alludes to paſſages in Mr. Cowley, whoſe manners and genius much reſembled his own. Both charm us with the *ſpleen* of virtue: and both were equally qualified, by the gifts of nature, to adorn the nobler, and the more familiar poetry.—The taſte, the execution, the ſucceſs, were happily on the ſide of our late poet.

12.

The guilty ſerpents, and obſcener beaſts,
Creep conſcious to their ſecret reſts;
Nature to thee does reverence pay,
Ill omens and ill ſights removes out of thy way [s].

13.

At thy appearance, Grief itſelf is ſaid
To ſhake his wings, and rouſe his head;
And cloudy Care has often took
A gentle beamy ſmile reflected from thy look.

14.

At thy appearance, Fear itſelf grows bold;
Thy ſun-ſhine melts away his cold.
Encourag'd at the ſight of thee,
To the cheek colour comes, and firmneſs to the knee.

15.

Even Luſt, the maſter of a harden'd face,
Bluſhes, if thou beeſt in the place;

[s] *Ill omens and ill ſights removes out of thy way.*] Alluding to the old Roman ſuperſtition, which anxiouſly provided, when a great general marched out of the city, that no inauſpicious object ſhould obſtruct or pollute his paſſage.

To

To Darkneſs' curtains he retires,
In ſympathizing night he rowls his ſmoaky fires.

16.

When, goddeſs, thou lift'ſt up thy waken'd head
Out of the morning's purple bed,
Thy choir of birds about thee play,
And all the joyful world ſalutes the riſing day.

17.

The ghoſts, and monſter ſpirits, that did preſume
A body's privilege to aſſume,
Vaniſh again inviſibly,
And bodies gain again their viſibility.

18.

All the world's bravery, that delights our eyes,
Is but thy ſeveral liveries:
Thou the rich dye on them beſtoweſt;
Thy nimble pencil paints this landſkip, as thou goeſt.

19.

A crimſon garment in the roſe thou wear'ſt;
A crown of ſtudded gold thou bear'ſt [t];

[t] *A crown of ſtudded gold thou bear'ſt*] In the flower ſo called, or *Crown Imperial*. The name of the

The virgin lilies, in their white,
Are clad but with the lawn of almoſt naked light.

20.

The violet, ſpring's little infant, ſtands
Girt in thy purple ſwadling-bands:
On the fair tulip thou doſt doat;
Thou cloath'ſt it in a gay and party-colour'd coat [*u*].

21.

With flame condens'd thou doſt the jewels fix,
And ſolid colours in it mix:
Flora herſelf envies, to ſee
Flowers fairer than her own, and durable as ſhe.

22.

Ah, goddeſs! would thou could'ſt thy hand withhold,
And be leſs liberal to gold;
Did'ſt thou leſs value to it give,
Of how much care (alas) might'ſt thou poor man relieve!

flower, and of its *bearing*, being the ſame, he could not well expreſs them *both*. Yet, in the connection which this line has with the foregoing, the mention of *one* only, has an ill effect.

[*u*] Prettily alluding to Joſeph's *coat of many colours*, Gen. xxxvii. 3, 4.

23. To

23.

To me, the ſun [*w*] is more delightful far,
And all fair days much fairer are.
But few, ah wondrous few there be,
Who do not gold prefer, o goddeſs, ev'n to thee.

24.

Through the ſoft ways of heaven, and air, and ſea,
Which open all their pores to thee;
Like a clear river, thou doſt glide,
And with thy living ſtream through the cloſe channels ſlide.

25.

But where firm bodies thy free courſe oppoſe,
Gently thy ſource the land o'erflows;
Takes there poſſeſſion, and does make,
Of colours mingled, light, a thick and ſtanding lake.

26.

But the vaſt ocean of unbounded day
In th' empyréan heaven does ſtay.

[*w*] *To me the ſun*] An inimitable ſtanza, in which the whole ſoul of the poet comes out, and ſhines through the pureſt and cleareſt expreſſion: like one of the *virgin-lilies*, he before celebrates,

—" *clad with the lawn of almoſt naked light.*"

Thy rivers, lakes, and ſprings below
From thence took firſt their riſe, thither at laſt muſt flow.

XIX.

To the ROYAL SOCIETY [x].

1.

PHILOSOPHY, the great and only heir
Of all that human knowledge, which has been
Unforfeited by man's rebellious ſin,
Though full of years he do appear,
(Philoſophy, I ſay, and call it, He,
For, whatſoe'er the painter's fancy be,
It a male-virtue ſeems to me)
Has ſtill been kept in nonage till of late,
Nor manag'd or enjoy'd his vaſt eſtate:

[x] This poem (beſides its intrinſic merit) is entitled to a place in this collection, from the relation it has to the *Propoſition for the advancement of experimental philoſophy*; which the reader will find in the end of this volume. It gives, too, an amiable picture of the poet's mind, in the concluding panegyric on his friend, Dr. Sprat, who had written the hiſtory of the *Royal Society*.

Three

Three or four thouſand years, one would have thought,
To ripeneſs and perfection might have brought
A ſcience ſo well bred and nurs'd [y],
And of ſuch hopeful parts too at the firſt.
But, oh, the guardians and the tutors then,
(Some negligent, and ſome ambitious men)
Would ne'er conſent to ſet him free,
Or his own natural powers to let him ſee,
Leſt that ſhould put an end to their authority.

2.

That his own buſineſs he might quite forget,
They' amus'd him with the ſports of wanton wit,
With the deſſerts of poetry they fed him [z],
Inſtead of ſolid meats t' increaſe his force;
Inſtead of vigorous exerciſe, they led him

[y] *A ſcience ſo well bred and nurs'd*] By Pythagoras and Democritus.

[z] *With the deſſerts of poetry they fed him*] Much of the ancient philoſophy, was only a luſcious mythology. The way of accounting for a natural phænomenon, was to tell a pleaſant ſtory. I ſuppoſe, the author had eſpecially in view Lord Bacon's *Sapientia veterum*, where that wiſe man amuſed himſelf and others—*with the ſports of wanton wit.*

Into

Into the pleaſant labyrinths of ever-freſh diſcourſe [*a*].
Inſtead of carrying him to ſee
The riches which do hoarded for him lie
In nature's endleſs treaſury,
They choſe his eye to entertain
(His curious, but not covetous eye [*b*])
With painted ſcenes, and pageants of the brain [*c*].
Some few exalted ſpirits [*d*] this latter age has ſhown,
That labour'd to aſſert the liberty
(From guardians, who were now uſurpers grown)
Of this old minor ſtill, captiv'd philoſophy;
But 'twas rebellion call'd, to fight
For ſuch a long-oppreſſed right.

[*a*] *Into the pleaſant labyrinths of ever-freſh diſcourſe*] The Platonic ſchool, which joined *eloquence* to philoſophy.

[*b*] *His* curious, *but not* covetous *eye*] i. e. ingenious *ſpeculation*, and not *uſe*, was the object of that philoſophy.

[*c*] —*pageants of the brain*] The peripatetic fancies——"tricks to ſhew the ſtretch of human brain." Pope.

[*d*] *Some few exalted ſpirits*] P. Ramus, and his followers, who *laboured to aſſert the liberty* of philoſophy from the uſurped dominion of the Ariſtotelians; men, who, under colour of *guarding* the rights of the old philoſophy, *tyrannized* over reaſon herſelf.

Bacon,

Bacon, at laſt, a mighty man, aroſe,
Whom a wiſe king and nature choſe
Lord chancellor of both their laws,
And boldly undertook the injur'd pupil's cauſe.

3.

Authority, which did a body boaſt,
Though 'twas but air condens'd and ſtalk'd about,
Like ſome old giant's more gigantic ghoſt,
To terrify the learned rout,
With the plain magic of true reaſon's light,
He chac'd out of our ſight,
Nor ſuffer'd living men to be miſled
By the vain ſhadows of the dead:
To graves, from whence it roſe, the conquer'd phantom fled;
[e] * * * *

4.

From words, which are but pictures of the thought,
(Though we our thoughts from them perverſely drew)
To things, the mind's right object, he it brought:
Like fooliſh birds, to painted grapes we flew;
He ſought, and gather'd for our uſe, the true;

[e] The reſt of this ſtanza is left out.

And,

And, when on heaps the choſen bunches lay,
He preſs'd them wiſely, the mechanic way [*f*],
Till all their juice did in one veſſel join,
Ferment into a nouriſhment divine,
The thirſty ſoul's refreſhing wine.
Who to the life an exact piece would make,
Muſt not from others work a copy take [*g*];
No, not from Rubens or Vandike;
Much leſs content himſelf to make it like
Th' ideas and the images, which lie
In his own fancy, or his memory [*h*].
No, he before his ſight muſt place
The natural and living face [*i*];
The real object muſt command
Each judgement of his eye, and motion of his hand.

[*f*] — *the mechanic way*] i. e. in the way of *experiment*.

[*g*] *Muſt not from others work a copy take*] As Gaſſendi did, whoſe philoſophy is nothing more than a *copy*, a fine one indeed, from that of Epicurus. ANON.

[*h*] *Th' ideas and the images, which lie*
In his own fancy, or his memory] Meaning Des Cartes, who went to work in this manner, and ſpun a ſubtle cobweb theory out of his own brain. ANON.

[*i*] *The natural and living face*]
"The naked nature and the living grace." Pope.

5. From

5.

From theſe, and all long errors of the way [*k*],
In which our wandering predeceſſors went,
And, like th' old Hebrews, many years did ſtray
  In deſarts but of ſmall extent,
Bacon, like Moſes, led us forth at laſt;
  The barren wilderneſs he paſt,
  Did on the very border ſtand
  Of the bleſt promis'd land;
And, from the mountain's top of his exalted wit,
  Saw it himſelf, and ſhew'd us it.
But life did never to one man allow
Time to diſcover worlds, and conquer too;
Nor can ſo ſhort a line ſufficient be
To fathom the vaſt depths of nature's ſea.
  The work he did, we ought t'admire,
And were unjuſt, if we ſhould more require
From his few years, divided 'twixt th' exceſs
Of low affliction, and high happineſs [*l*].

[*k*] *—errors of the way*] A beautiful Latiniſm—"—*pelagine* venis *erroribus* actus?" Virg. Æn. vi. 532. "Sive *errore viæ*, ſeu tempeſtatibus acti." Ib. vii. 199.

[*l*] —*'twixt th' exceſs*
Of low affliction and high happineſs] So expreſſed, as to convey not only the poet's idea of this ſituation, but his *ſenſe* of it.

For who on things remote can fix his ſight,
That's always in a triumph, or a fight?

6.

From you, great champions, we expect to get
Theſe ſpacious countries, but diſcover'd yet;
Countries, where yet, inſtead of nature, we
Her images and idols worſhip'd ſee:
Theſe large and wealthy regions to ſubdue,
Though learning has whole armies at command,
Quarter'd about in every land,
A better troop ſhe ne'er together drew.
Methinks, like Gideon's little band,
God with deſign has pick'd out you,
To do theſe noble wonders by a few:
When the whole hoſt he ſaw, they are (ſaid he)
Too many to o'ercome for me;
And now he chuſes out his men,
Much in the way that he did then:
Not thoſe many, whom he found
Idly extended on the ground,
To drink with their dejected head
The ſtream, juſt ſo as by their mouths it fled:
No, but thoſe few, who took the waters up,
And made of their laborious hands the cup.

7. Thus

7.

Thus you prepar'd; and in the glorious fight
Their wondrous pattern too [m] you take:
Their old and empty pitchers firſt they brake,
And with their hands then lifted up the light.
Io! ſound too the trumpets here!
Already your victorious lights appear;
New ſcenes of heaven already we eſpy,
And crowds of golden worlds on high;
Which, from the ſpacious plains of earth and ſea,
Could never yet diſcover'd be
By ſailors or Chaldæans watchful eye.
Nature's great works no diſtance can obſcure;
No ſmallneſs her near objects can ſecure;
Ye have taught the curious ſight to preſs
Into the privateſt receſs
Of her imperceptible littleneſs.
Ye have learn'd to read her ſmalleſt hand,
And well begun her deepeſt ſenſe to underſtand.

8.

Miſchief and true diſhonour fall on thoſe,
Who would to laughter or to ſcorn [n] expoſe

[m] *Their wondrous pattern too*] His laviſh wit never knows when to have done with an alluſion.

[n] —*to laughter or to ſcorn*] It is not to be conceived

So

So virtuous and ſo noble a deſign,
So human for its uſe, for knowledge ſo divine.
The things, which theſe proud men deſpiſe, and call
Impertinent and vain, and ſmall,
Thoſe ſmalleſt things of nature let me know,
Rather than all their greateſt actions do.
Whoever would depoſed truth advance
Into the throne uſurp'd from it,
Muſt feel at firſt the blows of ignorance,
And the ſharp points of envious wit.
So when, by various turns of the celeſtial dance,
In many thouſand years
A ſtar, ſo long unknown appears,
Though heaven itſelf more beauteous by it grow,
It troubles and alarms the world below,
Does to the wiſe a ſtar, to fools a meteor, ſhow.

9.

With courage and ſucceſs you the bold work begin;
Your cradle has not idle been:

what ridicule this ſociety drew upon itſelf from the wits on its firſt inſtitution —

"But ſenſe ſurviv'd, when merry jeſts were paſt;
"For riſing merit will buoy up at laſt." Pope.

None

None e'er but Hercules and you, could be
At five years age worthy a hiſtory.
  And ne'er did fortune better yet
  Th' hiſtorian [o] to the ſtory fit:
  As you from all old errors free
And purge the body of philoſophy;
  So from all modern follies he
Has vindicated eloquence and wit.
His candid ſtyle, like a clean ſtream, does ſlide,
  And his bright fancy all the way
  Does like the ſun-ſhine in it play;
It does, like Thames, the beſt of rivers, glide,
Where the god does not rudely overturn,
  But gently pour, the cryſtal urn,
And with judicious hand does the whole current guide.
'T has all the beauties, nature can impart,
And all the comely dreſs, without the paint of art.

[o] Dr. Sprat.

XX.

THE COMPLAINT [p].

1.

IN a deep viſion's intellectual ſcene,
Beneath a bower for ſorrow made
Th' uncomfortable ſhade,
Of the black yew's unlucky green,
Mix'd with the mourning willow's careful grey,
Where reverend Cam cuts out his famous way,
The melancholy Cowley lay:
And lo! a Muſe appear'd to his cloſ'd ſight,
(The Muſes oft in lands of viſion play)
Bodied, array'd, and ſeen by an internal light.

[p] The plan of this poem is highly poetical: and, though the numbers be not the moſt pleaſing, the expreſſion is almoſt every where natural and beautiful. But its principal charm is that air of melancholy, thrown over the whole, ſo expreſſive of the poet's character.

The *addreſs* of the writer is ſeen in conveying his juſt reproaches on the *court*, under a pretended vindication of it againſt the *Muſe*.

A gol-

A golden harp, with ſilver ſtrings, ſhe bore;
A wondrous hieroglyphic robe ſhe wore,
In which all colours and all figures were,
That nature or that fancy can create,
That art can never imitate;
And with looſe pride it wanton'd in the air.
In ſuch a dreſs, in ſuch a well-cloath'd dream,
She us'd, of old, near fair Iſmenus' ſtream,
Pindar her Theban favourite to meet;
A crown was on her head, and wings were on her feet.

2.

She touch'd him with her harp, and rais'd him from the ground;
The ſhaken ſtrings melodiouſly reſound.
Art thou return'd at laſt, ſaid ſhe,
To this forſaken place and me?
Thou prodigal, who didſt ſo looſely waſte
Of all thy youthful years, the good eſtate;
Art thou return'd here, to repent too late?
And gather huſks of learning up at laſt,
Now the rich harveſt-time of life is paſt,
And winter marches on ſo faſt?
But, when I meant t' adopt thee for my ſon,
And did as learn'd a portion aſſign,
As ever any of the mighty Nine
Had to their deareſt children done;

When I reſolv'd t' exalt thy' anointed name,
Among the ſpiritual lords [*q*] of peaceful fame;
Thou changeling, thou, bewitch'd with noiſe and
ſhow,
Wouldſt into courts and cities from me go;
Wouldſt ſee the world abroad, and have a ſhare
In all the follies and the tumults there,
Thou wouldſt, forſooth, be ſomething in a ſtate,
And buſineſs thou wouldſt find, and wouldſt create:
Buſineſs! the frivolous pretence
Of human luſts, to ſhake off innocence;
Buſineſs! the grave impertinence:
Buſineſs! the thing which I of all things hate,
Buſineſs! the contradiction of thy fate.

3.

Go, renegado, caſt up thy account,
And ſee to what amount
Thy fooliſh gains by quitting me:
The ſale of knowledge, fame, and liberty,
The fruits of thy unlearn'd apoſtacy.

[*q*] —*Spiritual Lords*] Alluding to the ſtyle of the Houſe of Lords—*the Lords Spiritual and Temporal.*—But ſee the note on *ſpiritual dignities*, p. 188.

Thou

Thou thought'ſt, if once the public ſtorm were paſt,
All thy remaining life ſhould ſun-ſhine be:
Behold, the public ſtorm is ſpent at laſt,
The ſovereign is toſt at ſea no more,
And thou, with all the noble company,
Art got at laſt to ſhore.
But, whilſt thy fellow-voyagers I ſee
All march'd up to poſſeſs the promis'd land,
Thou ſtill alone (alas) doſt gaping ſtand,
Upon the naked beach, upon the barren ſand.

4.

As a fair morning of the bleſſed ſpring,
After a tedious ſtormy night;
Such was the glorious entry of our king,
Enriching moiſture drop'd on every thing:
Plenty he ſow'd below, and caſt about him light.
But then (alas) to thee alone,
One of old Gideon's miracles was ſhown:
For every tree, and every herb around,
With pearly dew was crown'd,
And upon all the quicken'd ground,
The fruitful ſeed of heaven did brooding lie;
And nothing but the Muſe's fleece was dry.
It did all other threats ſurpaſs,
When God to his own people ſaid,

(The men, whom through long wanderings he had led)
That he would give them ev'n a heaven of braſs:
They look'd up to that heaven in vain,
That bounteous heaven, which God did not reſtrain,
Upon the moſt unjuſt to ſhine and rain.

5.

The Rachel [r], for which twice ſeven years and more,
Thou didſt with faith and labour ſerve,
And didſt (if faith and labour can) deſerve,
Though ſhe contracted was to thee,
Giv'n to another thou didſt ſee;
Giv'n to another, who had ſtore
Of fairer, and of richer wives, before;
And not a Leah left, thy recompence to be.
Go on, twice ſeven years more, thy fortune try;
Twice ſeven years more, God in his bounty may
Give thee, to fling away
Into the court's deceitful lottery,
But think how likely 'tis, that thou,
With the dull work of thy unweildy plough,

[r] *The Rachel*] The maſterſhip of the Savoy.

Shouldſt

Shouldſt in a hard and barren ſeaſon thrive,
Shouldſt even able be to live;
Thou, to whoſe ſhare ſo little bread did fall,
In the miraculous year, when manna rain'd on all.

6.

Thus ſpake the Muſe, and ſpake it with a ſmile,
That ſeem'd at once to pity and revile.
And to her thus, raiſing his thoughtful head,
The melancholy Cowley ſaid;
Ah wanton foe, doſt thou upbraid
The ills, which thou thyſelf haſt made?
When, in the cradle, innocent I lay,
Thou, wicked ſpirit, ſtoleſt me away,
And my abuſed ſoul didſt bear
Into thy new-found worlds, I know not where,
Thy golden Indies in the air:
And ever ſince I ſtrive in vain
My raviſh'd freedom to regain;
Still I rebel, ſtill thou doſt reign;
Lo, ſtill in verſe againſt thee I complain.
There is a ſort of ſtubborn weeds,
Which, if the earth but once it ever breeds,
No wholeſome herb can near them thrive,
No uſeful plant can keep alive:

The fooliſh ſports I did on thee beſtow,
Make all my art and labour fruitleſs now;
Where once ſuch Fairies dance, no graſs [*s*] doth
ever grow.

7.

When my new mind had no infuſion known,
Thou gav'ſt ſo deep a tincture of thine own,
That ever ſince I vainly try
To waſh away th' inherent dye:
Long work perhaps may ſpoil thy colours quite,
But never will reduce the native white:
To all the ports of honour and of gain
I often ſteer my courſe in vain;
Thy gale comes croſs, and drives me back again.
Thou ſlack'neſt all my nerves of induſtry,
By making them ſo oft to be
The tinkling ſtrings of thy looſe minſtrelſy.

[*s*] —*no graſs*] i. e. no graſs which turns to profit.—The poet alludes, in this verſe, to the *four ringlets*, which are ſometimes found in paſture-grounds, and, according to the philoſophy of the country-people, are occaſioned by fairies dancing upon them. He had probably his eye on that fine paſſage of Shakeſpear,

—— "ye demy-puppets, that
"By moon-ſhine do the green four ringlets make,
"Whereof the ewe not bites"——

Tempeſt, Act v. S. ii.

Whoever

Whoever this world's happineſs would ſee,
Muſt as entirely caſt off thee,
As they, who only heaven deſire,
Do from the world retire.
This was my error, this my groſs miſtake,
Myſelf a demy-votary to make.
Thus, with Sapphira and her huſband's fate,
(A fault which I, like them, am taught too late)
For all that I give up, I nothing gain,
And periſh for the part which I retain.

8.

Teach me not, then, o thou fallacious Muſe,
The court, and better king [*t*], t' accuſe;
The heaven, under which I live, is fair;
The fertile ſoil will a full harveſt bear;
Thine, thine, is all the barrenneſs; if thou
Mak'ſt me ſit ſtill and ſing, when I ſhould plough:

[*t*] —*better king*] i. e. *better* in his own nature, than *the court* [his miniſters] would allow him to be. The ſuppoſition was decent, but not true. The miniſter of that time was juſt, nay generous, to our poet. [See *Lord Clarendon's Life*, Part i. 16.] But, unluckily, the poet's patrons were the miniſter's moſt determined enemies. In the mean time, *the better king* cared neither for the miniſter, nor the poet.

When

When I but think, how many a tedious year
Our patient ſovereign did attend
His long misfortunes' fatal end!
How chearfully, and how exempt from fear,
On the great Sovereign's will he did depend;
I ought to be accurs'd, if I refuſe
To wait on his, o thou fallacious Muſe!
Kings have long hands (they ſay); and though I be
So diſtant, they may reach at length to me.
However, of all princes, thou
Should'ſt not reproach rewards, for being ſmall or ſlow;
Thou, who rewardeſt but with popular breath,
And that too, after death.

END OF THE POEMS.

ΠΑΕΟΝ ΗΜΙΣΥ ΠΑΝΤΟΣ.

A PRO-

A

PROPOSITION

FOR

The ADVANCEMENT of EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY [a].

THE COLLEGE.

THAT the philoſophical college be ſituated within one, two, or (at fartheſt) three miles of London; and, if it

[a] Ingenious men delight in dreams of reformation.—In comparing this *Propoſition* of Cowley, with *that* of Milton, addreſſed to Mr. Hartlib, we find that theſe great poets had amuſed themſelves with ſome exalted, and, in the main, congenial fancies, on the ſubject of education: that, of the *two* plans, propoſed, this of Mr. Cowley was better digeſted, and is the *leſs* fanciful; if a preference, in this reſpect, can be given to either, when both are manifeſtly Utopian: and that our univerſities, in their preſent form, are well enough calculated to anſwer all the reaſonable ends of ſuch inſtitutions; provided we allow for the unavoidable defects of them, when drawn out into practice.

be

be poſſible to find that convenience, upon the ſide of the river, or very near it.

That the revenue of this college amount to four thouſand pounds a year.

That the company received into it be as follows:

1. Twenty philoſophers or profeſſors. 2. Sixteen young ſcholars, ſervants to the profeſſors. 3. A chaplain. 4. A bailiff for the revenue. 5. A manciple or purveyor for the proviſions of the houſe. 6. Two gardeners. 7. A maſter-cook. 8. An under-cook. 9. A butler. 10. An under-butler. 11. A ſurgeon. 12. Two lungs, or chemical ſervants. 13. A library-keeper, who is likewiſe to be apothecary, druggiſt, and keeper of inſtruments, engines, &c. 14. An officer, to feed and take care of all beaſts, fowl, &c. kept by the college. 15. A groom of the ſtable. 16. A meſſenger, to ſend up and down for all uſes of the college. 17. Four old women, to tend the chambers, keep the houſe clean, and ſuch like ſervices.

That

That the annual allowance for this company be as follows: 1. To every profeſſor, and to the chaplain, one hundred and twenty pounds. 2. To the ſixteen ſcholars twenty pounds apiece, ten pounds for their diet, and ten pounds for their entertainment. 3. To the bailiff, thirty pounds, beſides allowance for his journies. 4. To the purveyor, or manciple, thirty pounds. 5. To each of the gardeners, twenty pounds. 6. To the maſter-cook, twenty pounds. 7. To the under-cook, four pounds. 8. To the butler, ten pounds. 9. To the under-butler, four pounds. 10. To the ſurgeon, thirty pounds. 11. To the library-keeper, thirty pounds. 12. To each of the lungs, twelve pounds. 13. To the keeper of the beaſts, ſix pounds. 14. To the groom, five pounds. 15. To the meſſenger, twelve pounds. 16. To the four neceſſary women, ten pounds. For the manciples table, at which all the ſervants of the houſe are to eat, except the ſcholars, one hundred and ſixty pounds. For three horſes

horſes for the ſervice of the college, thirty pounds.

All which amounts to three thouſand two hundred eighty-five pounds. So that there remains, for keeping of the houſe and gardens, and operatories, and inſtruments, and animals, and experiments of all ſorts, and all other expences, ſeven hundred and fifteen pounds.

Which were a very inconſiderable ſum for the great uſes to which it is deſigned, but that I conceive the induſtry of the college will in a ſhort time ſo enrich itſelf, as to get a far better ſtock for the advance and enlargement of the work when it is once begun: neither is the continuance of particular mens liberality to be deſpaired of, when it ſhall be encouraged by the ſight of that public benefit which will accrue to all mankind, and chiefly to our nation, by this foundation. Something likewiſe will ariſe from leaſes and other caſualties; that nothing of which may be diverted to the private gain of the profeſſors, or any other uſe

uſe beſides that of the ſearch of nature, and by it the general good of the world, and that care may be taken for the certain performance of all things ordained by the inſtitution, as likewiſe for the protection and encouragement of the company, it is propoſed:

That ſome perſon of eminent quality, a lover of ſolid learning, and no ſtranger in it, be choſen chancellor or preſident of the college; and that eight governors more, men qualified in the like manner, be joined with him, two of which ſhall yearly be appointed viſitors of the college, and receive an exact account of all expences even to the ſmalleſt, and of the true eſtate of their public treaſure, under the hands and oaths of the profeſſors reſident.

That the choice of profeſſors in any vacancy belong to the chancellor and the governors; but that the profeſſors (who are likelieſt to know what men of the nation are moſt proper for the duties of their ſociety) direct their choice, by recommending two or three

perſons

perſons to them at every election: and that, if any learned perſon within his majeſty's dominions diſcover, or eminently improve, any uſeful kind of knowledge, he may upon that ground, for his reward and the encouragement of others, be preferred, if he pretend to the place, before any body elſe.

That the governors have power to turn out any profeſſor, who ſhall be proved to be either ſcandalous or unprofitable to the ſociety.

That the college be built after this, or ſome ſuch manner: That it conſiſt of three fair quadrangular courts, and three large grounds, incloſed with good walls behind them. That the firſt court be built with a fair cloiſter; and the profeſſors lodgings, or rather little houſes, four on each ſide, at ſome diſtance from one another, and with little gardens behind them, juſt after the manner of the Chartreux beyond ſea. That the inſide of the cloiſter be lined with a gravel-walk, and that walk with a row of trees;

trees; and that in the middle there be a parterre of flowers and a fountain.

That the ſecond quadrangle, juſt behind the firſt, be ſo contrived, as to contain theſe parts. 1. A chapel. 2. A hall, with two long tables on each ſide, for the ſcholars and officers of the houſe to eat at, and with a pulpit and forms at the end for the public lectures. 3. A large and pleaſant dining-room within the hall, for the profeſſors to eat in, and to hold their aſſemblies and conferences. 4. A public ſchool-houſe. 5. A library. 6. A gallery to walk in, adorned with the pictures or ſtatues of all the inventors of any thing uſeful to human life; as printing, guns, America, &c. and of late in anatomy, the circulation of the blood, the milky veins, and ſuch like diſcoveries in any art, with ſhort elogies under the portraitures: as likewiſe the figures of all ſorts of creatures, and the ſtuft ſkins of as many ſtrange animals as can be gotten. 7. An anatomy-chamber, adorned with ſkeletons and anatomical pic-

tures, and prepared with all conveniences for diſſection. 8. A chamber for all manner of drugs, and apothecaries materials. 9. A mathematical chamber, furniſhed with all ſorts of mathematical inſtruments, being an appendix to the library. 10. Lodgings for the chaplain, ſurgeon, library-keeper, and purveyor, near the chapel, anatomy-chamber, library, and hall.

That the third court be on one ſide of theſe, very large, but meanly built, being deſigned only for uſe, and not for beauty too as the others. That it contain the kitchen, butteries, brew-houſe, bake-houſe, dairy, lardry, ſtables, &c. and eſpecially great laboratories for chemical operations, and lodgings for the under-ſervants.

That behind the ſecond court be placed the garden, containing all ſorts of plants that our ſoil will bear; and at the end a little houſe of pleaſure, a lodge for the gardener, and a grove of trees cut out into walks.

That the ſecond incloſed ground be a garden, deſtined only to the trial of all manner

manner of experiments concerning plants, as their melioration, acceleration, retardation, conſervation, compoſition, tranſmutation, coloration, or whatſoever elſe can be produced by art either for uſe or curioſity, with a lodge in it for the gardener.

That the third ground be employed in convenient receptacles for all ſorts of creatures which the profeſſors ſhall judge neceſſary, for their more exact ſearch into the nature of animals, and the improvement of their uſes to us.

That there be likewiſe built, in ſome place of the college where it may ſerve moſt for ornament of the whole, a very high tower for obſervation of celeſtial bodies, adorned with all ſorts of dials and ſuch like curioſities; and that there be very deep vaults made under ground, for experiments moſt proper to ſuch places, which will be undoubtedly very many.

Much might be added; but truly I am afraid this is too much already for the charity or generoſity of this age to extend

to; and we do not design this after the model of Solomon's house in my Lord Bacon (which is a project for experiments that can never be experimented), but propose it within such bounds of expence as have often been exceeded by the buildings of private citizens.

OF THE PROFESSORS, SCHOLARS, CHAPLAIN, AND OTHER OFFICERS.

THAT of the twenty professors four be always travelling beyond seas, and sixteen always resident, unless by permission upon extraordinary occasions; and every one so absent, leaving a deputy behind him to supply his duties.

That the four professors itinerant be assigned to the four parts of the world, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, there to reside three years at least; and to give a constant account of all things that belong to the learning, and especially natural experimental philosophy, of those parts.

That

That the expence of all diſpatches, and all books, ſimples, animals, ſtones, metals, minerals, &c. and all curioſities whatſoever, natural or artificial, ſent by them to the college, ſhall be defrayed out of the treaſury, and an additional allowance (above the 120 *l.*) made to them as ſoon as the college's revenue ſhall be improved.

That, at their going abroad, they ſhall take a ſolemn oath, never to write any thing to the college, but what, after very diligent examination, they ſhall fully believe to be true, and to confeſs and recant it as ſoon as they find themſelves in an error.

That the ſixteen profeſſors reſident ſhall be bound to ſtudy and teach all ſorts of natural, experimental philoſophy, to conſiſt of the mathematics, mechanics, medicine, anatomy, chemiſtry, the hiſtory of animals, plants, minerals, elements, &c.; agriculture, architecture, art military, navigation, gardening; the myſteries of all trades, and improvement of them; the facture of all merchandizes, all natural ma-

gic or divination; and briefly all things contained in the catalogue of natural hiſtories annexed to my Lord Bacon's Organon.

That once a day from Eaſter till Michaelmas, and twice a week from Michaelmas to Eaſter, at the hours in the afternoon moſt convenient for auditors from London, according to the time of the year, there ſhall be a lecture read in the hall, upon ſuch parts of natural experimental philoſophy, as the profeſſors ſhall agree on among themſelves, and as each of them ſhall be able to perform uſefully and honourably.

That two of the profeſſors, by daily, weekly, or monthly turns, ſhall teach the public ſchools, according to the rules hereafter preſcribed.

That all the profeſſors ſhall be equal in all reſpects (except precedency, choice of lodging, and ſuch like privileges, which ſhall belong to ſeniority in the college); and that all ſhall be maſters and treaſurers by annual turns, which two officers for the time

time being ſhall take place of all the reſt, and ſhall be *arbitri duarum menſarum*.

That the maſter ſhall command all the officers of the college, appoint aſſemblies or conferences upon occaſion, and preſide in them with a double voice; and in his abſence the treaſurer, whoſe buſineſs is to receive and diſburſe all monies by the maſter's order in writing (if it be an extraordinary), after conſent of the other profeſſors.

That all the profeſſors ſhall ſup together in the parlour within the hall every night, and ſhall dine there twice a week (to wit, Sundays and Thurſdays) at two round tables, for the convenience of diſcourſe, which ſhall be for the moſt part of ſuch matters as may improve their ſtudies and profeſſions; and to keep them from falling into looſe or unprofitable talk, ſhall be the duty of the two *arbitri menſarum*, who may likewiſe command any of the ſervant-ſcholars to read to them what he ſhall think fit, whilſt they are at table: that it ſhall belong

likewiſe to the ſaid *arbitri menſarum* only, to invite ſtrangers; which they ſhall rarely do, unleſs they be men of learning or great parts, and ſhall not invite above two at a time to one table, nothing being more vain and unfruitful than numerous meetings of acquaintance.

That the profeſſors reſident ſhall allow the college twenty pounds a year for their diet, whether they continue there all the time or not.

That they ſhall have once a week an aſſembly, or conference, concerning the affairs of the college and the progreſs of their experimental philoſophy.

That, if any one find out any thing which he conceives to be of conſequence, he ſhall communicate it to the aſſembly, to be examined, experimented, approved, or rejected.

That, if any one be author of an invention that may bring in profit, the third part of it ſhall belong to the inventor, and the two other to the ſociety; and beſides if the

thing

thing be very conſiderable, his ſtatue or picture, with an elogy under it ſhall be placed in the gallery, and made a deniſon of that corporation of famous men.

That all the profeſſors ſhall be always aſſigned to ſome particular inquiſition (beſides the ordinary courſe of their ſtudies), of which they ſhall give an account to the aſſembly; ſo that by this means there may be every day ſome operation or other made in all the arts, as chemiſtry, anatomy, mechanics, and the like; and that the college ſhall furniſh for the charge of the operation.

That there ſhall be kept a regiſter under lock and key, and not to be ſeen but by the profeſſors, of all the experiments that ſucceed, ſigned by the perſons who made the trial.

That the popular and received errors in experimental philoſophy (with which, like weeds in a neglected garden, it is now almoſt all over-grown) ſhall be evinced by trial, and taken notice of in the public

lectures, that they may no longer abuſe the credulous, and beget new ones by conſequence or ſimilitude.

That every third year (after the full ſettlement of the foundation) the college ſhall give an account in print, in proper and antient Latin, of the fruits of their triennial induſtry.

That every profeſſor reſident ſhall have his ſcholar to wait upon him in his chamber and at table; whom he ſhall be obliged to breed up in natural philoſophy, and render an account of his progreſs to the aſſembly, from whoſe election he received him, and therefore is reſponſible to it, both for the care of his education and the juſt and civil uſage of him.

That the ſcholar ſhall underſtand Latin very well, and be moderately initiated in the Greek, before he be capable of being choſen into the ſervice; and that he ſhall not remain in it above ſeven years.

That his lodging ſhall be with the profeſſor whom he ſerves.

That

That no profeſſor ſhall be a married man, or a divine, or lawyer in practice; only phyſic he may be allowed to preſcribe, becauſe the ſtudy of that art is a great part of the duty of his place, and the duty of that is ſo great, that it will not ſuffer him to loſe much time in mercenary practice.

That the profeſſors ſhall, in the college, wear the habit of ordinary maſters of art in the univerſities, or of doctors, if any of them be ſo.

That they ſhall all keep an inviolable and exemplary friendſhip with one another; and that the aſſembly ſhall lay a conſiderable pecuniary mulct upon any one who ſhall be proved to have entered ſo far into a quarrel as to give uncivil language to his brother-profeſſor; and that the perſeverance in any enmity ſhall be puniſhed by the governors with expulſion.

That the chaplain ſhall eat at the maſter's table (paying his twenty pounds a year as the others do); and that he ſhall read prayers once a day at leaſt, a little before ſupper-

time; that he ſhall preach in the chapel every Sunday morning, and catechize in the afternoon the ſcholars and the ſchool-boys; that he ſhall every month adminiſter the holy ſacrament; that he ſhall not trouble himſelf and his auditors with the controverſies of divinity, but only teach God in his juſt commandments, and in his wonderful works.

THE SCHOOL.

THAT the ſchool may be built ſo as to contain about two hundred boys.

That it be divided into four claſſes, not as others are ordinarily into ſix or ſeven; becauſe we ſuppoſe that the children ſent hither, to be initiated in things as well as words, ought to have paſt the two or three firſt, and to have attained the age of about thirteen years, being already well advanced in the Latin grammar, and ſome authors.

That none, though never ſo rich, ſhall pay any thing for their teaching; and that, if any profeſſor ſhall be convicted to have taken

taken any money in conſideration of his pains in the ſchool, he ſhall be expelled with ignominy by the governors; but if any perſons of great eſtate and quality, finding their ſons much better proficients in learning here, than boys of the ſame age commonly are at other ſchools, ſhall not think fit to receive an obligation of ſo near concernment without returning ſome marks of acknowledgment, they may, if they pleaſe, (for nothing is to be demanded) beſtow ſome little rarity or curioſity upon the ſociety, in recompence of their trouble.

And becauſe it is deplorable to conſider the loſs which children make of their time at moſt ſchools, employing, or rather caſting away, ſix or ſeven years in the learning of words only, and that too very imperfectly:

That a method be here eſtabliſhed, for the infuſing knowledge and language at the ſame time into them; and that this may be their apprenticeſhip in natural philoſophy. This, we conceive, may be done, by

by breeding them up in authors, or pieces of authors, who treat of ſome parts of nature, and who may be underſtood with as much eaſe and pleaſure, as thoſe which are commonly taught; ſuch are, in Latin, Varro, Cato, Columella, Pliny, part of Celſus and of Seneca, Cicero de Divinatione, de Naturâ Deorum, and ſeveral ſcattered pieces, Virgil's Georgics, Grotius, Nemeſianus, Manilius: And becauſe the truth is, we want good poets (I mean we have but few), who have purpoſely treated of ſolid and learned, that is, natural matters (the moſt part indulging to the weakneſs of the world, and feeding it either with the follies of love, or with the fables of gods and heroes), we conceive that one book ought to be compiled of all the ſcattered little parcels among the antient poets that might ſerve for the advancement of natural ſcience, and which would make no ſmall or unuſeful or unpleaſant volume. To this we would have added the morals and rhetorics of Cicero, and the inſtitutions of

Quincti-

Quinctilian; and for the comedians, from whom almoſt all that neceſſary part of common diſcourſe, and all the moſt intimate proprieties of the language are drawn, we conceive, the boys may be made maſters of them, as a part of their recreation, and not of their taſk, if once a month, or at leaſt once in two, they act one of Terence's Comedies, and afterwards (the moſt advanced) ſome of Plautus's; and this is for many reaſons one of the beſt exerciſes they can be enjoined, and moſt innocent pleaſures they can be allowed. As for the Greek authors, they may ſtudy Nicander, Oppianus (whom Scaliger does not doubt to prefer above Homer himſelf, and place next to his adored Virgil), Ariſtotle's hiſtory of animals, and other parts, Theophraſtus and Dioſcorides of plants, and a collection made out of ſeveral both poets and other Grecian writers. For the morals and rhetoric, Ariſtotle may ſuffice, or Hermogenes and Longinus be added for the latter. With the hiſtory of animals they ſhould be

be ſhewed anatomy as a divertiſement, and made to know the figures and natures of thoſe creatures which are not common among us, diſabuſing them at the ſame time of thoſe errors which are univerſally admitted concerning many. The ſame method ſhould be uſed to make them acquainted with all plants; and to this muſt be added a little of the antient and modern geography, the underſtanding of the globes, and the principles of geometry and aſtronomy. They ſhould likewiſe uſe to declaim in Latin and Engliſh, as the Romans did in Greek and Latin; and in all this travel be rather led on by familiarity, encouragement, and emulation, than driven by ſeverity, puniſhment, and terror. Upon feſtivals and play-times, they ſhould exerciſe themſelves in the fields, by riding, leaping, fencing, muſtering and training after the manner of ſoldiers, &c. And, to prevent all dangers and all diſorder, there ſhould always be two of the ſcholars with them, to be as witneſſes and directors of their actions; in foul weather, it would

not

not be amiſs for them to learn to dance, that is, to learn juſt ſo much (for all beyond is ſuperfluous, if not worſe) as may give them a graceful comportment of their bodies.

Upon Sundays, and all days of devotion, they are to be a part of the chaplain's province.

That, for all theſe ends, the college ſo order it, as that there may be ſome convenient and pleaſant houſes thereabouts, kept by religious, diſcreet, and careful perſons, for the lodging and boarding of young ſcholars; that they have a conſtant eye over them, to ſee that they be bred up there piouſly, cleanly, and plentifully, according to the proportion of the parents expences.

And that the college, when it ſhall pleaſe God, either by their own induſtry and ſucceſs, or by the benevolence of patrons, to enrich them ſo far, as that it may come to their turn, and duty to be charitable to others, ſhall, at their own charges, erect and maintain ſome houſe or houſes for the entertainment of ſuch poor mens ſons, whoſe

good natural parts may promiſe either uſe or ornament to the commonwealth, during the time of their abode at ſchool; and ſhall take care that it ſhall be done with the ſame conveniences as are enjoyed even by rich mens children (though they maintain the fewer for that cauſe), there being nothing of eminent and illuſtrious to be expected from a low, ſordid, and hoſpital-like education.

CONCLUSION.

IF I be not much abuſed by a natural fondneſs to my own conceptions (that στοργὴ of the Greeks, which no other language has a proper word for), there was never any project thought upon, which deſerves to meet with ſo few adverſaries as this; for who can without impudent folly oppoſe the eſtabliſhment of twenty well-ſelected perſons in ſuch a condition of life, that their whole buſineſs and ſole profeſſion may be to ſtudy the improvement and

and advantage of all other profeſſions, from that of the higheſt general even to the loweſt artiſan? who ſhall be obliged to employ their whole time, wit, learning, and induſtry, to theſe four, the moſt uſeful that can be imagined, and to no other ends; firſt, to weigh, examine, and prove all things of nature delivered to us by former ages; to detect, explode, and ſtrike a cenſure through all falſe monies with which the world has been paid and cheated ſo long; and (as I may ſay) to ſet the mark of the college upon all true coins, that they may paſs hereafter without any farther trial: ſecondly, to recover the loſt inventions, and, as it were, drowned lands of the ancients: thirdly, to improve all arts which we now have; and laſtly, to diſcover others which we yet have not: and who ſhall beſides all this (as a benefit by the bye), give the beſt education in the world (purely *gratis*) to as many mens children as ſhall think fit to make uſe of the obligation? Neither does it at all check or interfere with any

any parties in a ſtate or religion; but is indifferently to be embraced by all differences in opinion, and can hardly be conceived capable (as many good inſtitutions have done) even of degeneration into any thing harmful. So that, all things conſidered, I will ſuppoſe this propoſition ſhall encounter with no enemies: the only queſtion is, whether it will find friends enough to carry it on from diſcourſe and deſign to reality and effect; the neceſſary expences of the beginning (for it will maintain itſelf well enough afterwards) being ſo great (though I have ſet them as low as is poſſible in order to ſo vaſt a work), that it may ſeem hopeleſs to raiſe ſuch a ſum out of thoſe few dead relics of human charity and public generoſity which are yet remaining in the world.

THE END OF VOL. I.

151/2 HR

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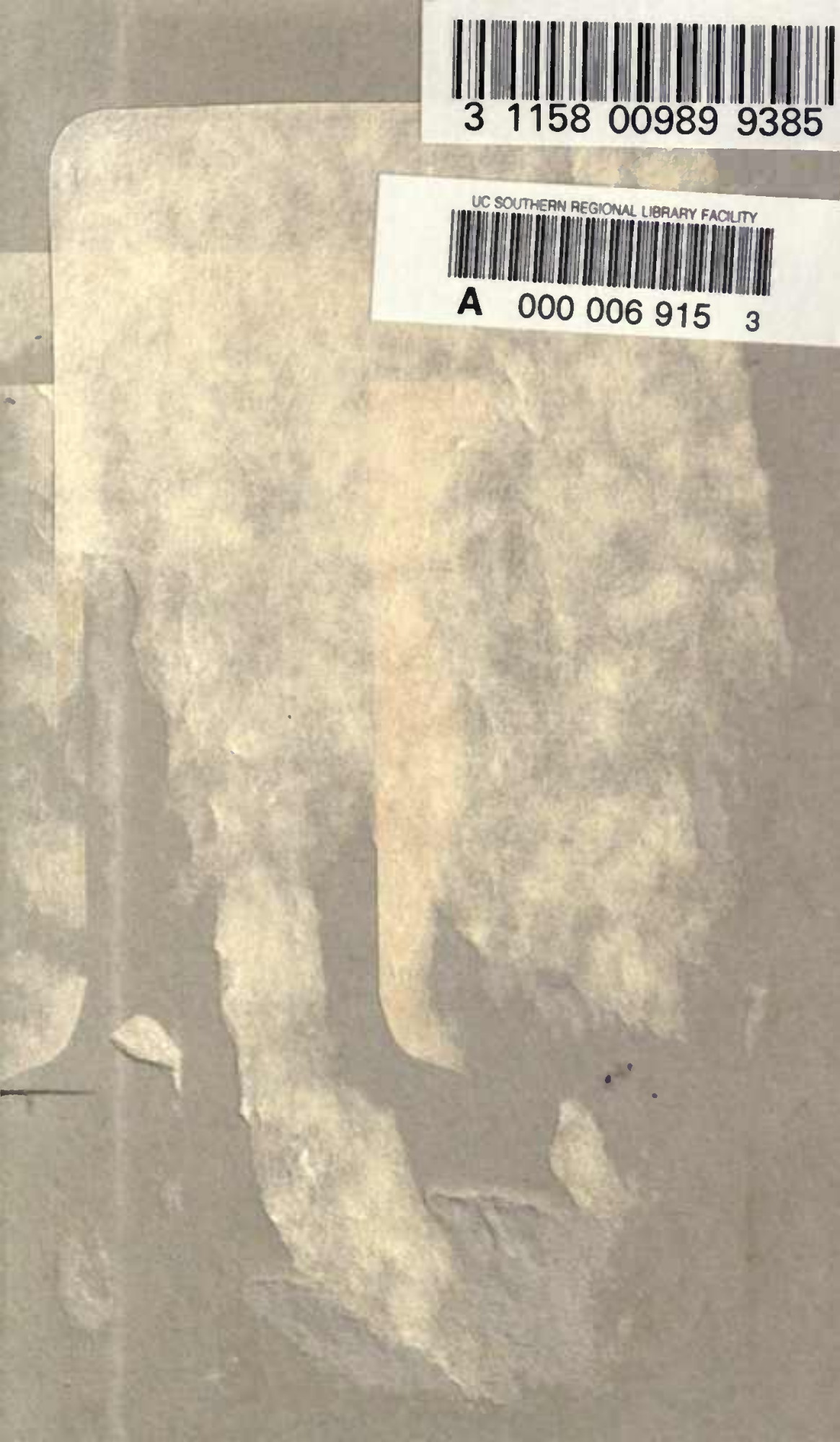
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